



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees

From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education

Date: December 19, 2022

Subject: **Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting – December 6, 2022**

Origin: Susie Lee-Fernandes, Superintendent of Education

Please find attached a copy of the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting held on December 6, 2022.

TB/SLF/dp

Attachment: Minutes of December 6, 2022



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board

December 6, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

V. Adamo (Chair, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired), W. Heeney (Durham Down Syndrome Association), J. Sorhaitz (Learning Disabilities Ontario), A. Massis (Community Representative), C. Nosseir (Grandview Kids), Candace Julien (Community Representative)

Members Absent:

S. Casola (Autism Ontario)

Trustees Present:

J. McCafferty

Staff Present:

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), S. Phoenix (Manager of Social Work and Child and Youth Counsellors/Chief Attendance Officer), F. Pileggi (Communications)

SEAC Representatives:

D. Allen (CPCO Representative), L. Jemmott (OECTA Representative),
Maureen Cope (CUPE Representative)

1. Opening
 - 1.1. Land Acknowledgements
 - 1.2. Memorials and Prayer
 - 1.3. Roll Call and Apologies
 - 1.4. Call to Order

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m., offered the opening prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1.5. Approval of the Agenda

Motion:

SS-2022-12-06-01

Approval of Agenda

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, December 6, 2022 meeting, as printed."

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by J. Sorhaitz.
CARRIED

1.6. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

Motion:

SS-2022-12-06-02

Approval of the Minutes

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the Tuesday, November 8, 2022 meeting, as printed."

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by A. Massis.
CARRIED

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes announced that as of January 2023, the SEAC Meetings will once again be held in-person at the Durham Catholic Education Centre.

2.1. Presentations

2.2. Learning Disabilities - Julie Sorhaitz

Julie Sorhaitz, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region, presented an overview of Learning Disabilities (LD) and the challenges faced by people with LD.

Julie referenced the following types of LDs and gave a brief explanation of each one:

- Dyslexia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyscalculia
- Non-verbal Learning Disabilities or Non-verbal Learning Disorder (NVLD or NLD)

Anyone interested in obtaining more information about Learning Disabilities can visit: LDADR.on.ca

Julie answered questions as they arose.

2.3. Discussion Items

2.3.1. Review of Special Education Data including IEPs

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided the following breakdown of the Special Education data since September:

Students with IEPs:

- 3094 (total number)
- 1708 Accommodated
- 881 Modified
- 505 Alternative
- 1619 Students with Assistive Technology (AT) as of June 2022
- 75 New AT referrals received since September

Referrals to Behaviour Resource Team

Total = 23

- 11 Consultations
- 12 Comprehensive

Referrals to Autism Resource Team

Total = 33

- 22 Consultations
- 11 Comprehensive

Lexia Licenses - 500

2.3.2. Review Accessibility Plan

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared the link to the DCDSB's [Accessibility webpage](#), where the accessibility statement and key legislation (e.g., Bill 25 – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005) can be found. As well, staff, parents/guardians and community members can submit their accessibility concerns directly to the Board using the online form.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes drew attention to the Accessibility Advisory Committee, whose purpose is to give overall direction that governs compliance with legislation around accessibility and standards. The committee's objectives are to identify and recommend prevention strategies, remove barriers for people with disabilities and coordinate and respond to all communications relating to accessibility concerns.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared that the Accessibility Committee is composed of the following members:

1. Superintendent of Facilities
2. Manager of Custodial and Maintenance Services
3. Principal
4. Resource Teacher for Hearing Services
5. Resource Teacher for Vision Services
6. Special Education Consultant
7. WSIB/Disability Claims Management Officer
8. Human Resources Coordinator
8. Program Support Teacher
9. Manager Information, Communications and Technology
10. Operations Manager (Durham Student Transportation Services - DSTS)
11. Business Services Representative
11. Communications Manager
12. Community Representation

The Accessibility Advisory Committee establishes a framework that ensures compliance with the AODA legislative acts and related regulations. The committee meets a minimum of 3 times a year (September, January and May) to review progress.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes also provided a brief overview of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (Revised 2018).

The Action Plan has been developed in the following key areas:

- Customer Service Standard
- Employment
- Policies and Procedures
- Transportation
- Information and Communication
- Accessibility Training for Educators
- Built Environment

The Superintendent answered questions from the committee.

2.4. Business arising from previous meeting

Chair Adamo welcomed Candace Julien, the new committee member.

2.5. Staff Reports

- 2.5.1. Student Service Report - Helen Killoran, Shelley Phoenix, Susie Lee-Fernandes

Coordinator's Report – H. Killoran

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes, on behalf of Helen, reported that the next Program Support Teacher Mentoring session will be held on December 15th.

The December Sharing of Excellence Series is a 2-part series - Principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA): Data Collection.

The Superintendent added that the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Working Days are now completed, and the SIP Claims will be submitted to the Regional Office of the Ministry by December 16, 2022. The Ministry will review, approve and finalize SIP claims by August 31, 2023, in time for the 2023-24 school year.

Mental Health Report – S. Phoenix

Shelley Phoenix noted that Yulan Fisher-Brown, Student Services Mental Health Leader, hosted Violent Threat Risk Assessment, the Role of the Educator training on November 4th and held a Mental Health Steering Committee meeting on November 10th, which was well attended by DCDSB staff.

The Mental Health Steering Committee is currently working on the new Mental Health and Addictions Strategy for 2023-2026.

The Talking About Mental Illness (TAMI) program has been running at St. Francis and St. James during the month of November.

Shelley also shared the recent and upcoming sessions:

- Traumatic Events Systems Training - December 1st and 2nd
- ASIST Tune Up - December 6th
- Foundational Skills for Suicide Risk and Assessment and Management Training for Social Work Staff - December 8th
- TAMI to run at St. Monica, St. Anne and St. Patrick during December

Special Education Review Update- S. Lee-Fernandes

The Superintendent informed the committee that on December 13th, a Pre-meeting is scheduled with Abilities Centre to discuss improvement plan recommendations. On December 15th, the LEAD Committee will meet to also discuss improvement plan recommendations.

A survey was developed for staff groups that will inform our goals/improvement plan (week of December 12).

The first survey will go out to the Student Services Staff to get some input in areas of improvement around employee satisfaction and well-being. The other survey will go out to Principals and Program Support Teachers (PSTs) to provide feedback on how the Student Services Department can better support the DCDSB schools and staff.

The Superintendent shared that the new Data and Research Officer will provide an analysis/summary of the feedback and input from parents/guardians, the Student Services Department and other staff by the end of December or early January. This information is anticipated to be brought back to SEAC in February.

2.6. Association Reports

2.7. Correspondence

2.7.1. Letter from Sawabona dated November 14, 2022

The Letter addressed to the SEAC committee informs of the formal name change, of the Black Parent Support Group to Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support (a.k.a. "Sawubona").

It was agreed that the letter be received and filed.

2.7.2. Letter from Peel-Dufferin Catholic District School Board dated October 14, 2022

The letter, addressed to Minister Lecce from Bruno Iannicca, Chair of SEAC, and Dely Farrace, SEAC Vice Chair, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) requesting that the Ministry of Education consider providing the option to extend the time students with differing abilities have to remain or continue in Secondary School beyond year 7 and beyond age 21.

The committee agreed to discuss this matter with their respective associations and provide feedback at the January 10th SEAC meeting.

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

None

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion:

SS-2022-12-06-04

Motion to Adjourn

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“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of December 6, 2022 adjourn.”

Moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by J. McCafferty.

CARRIED

3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2022 @ 7:30 pm

3.2.2. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by Vice Chair Heeney.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Valerie Adamo

Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto