



**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 – November 8, 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 November 8, 2022.

TB/SLF/dp

Attachment: Minutes of November 8, 2022



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

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board

November 8, 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), Candice Julien (Community Representative)

Members Absent:

C. Nosseir (Grandview Kids), S. Casola (Autism Ontario)

Trustees Present:

J. McCafferty

Trustees Absent:

J. Oldman

Staff Present:

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), Michaela Evans (Senior Manager, Psychological and Speech-Language Services/Chief Psychologist), F. Mosier (Student Services Coordinator), F. Pileggi (Communications)

SEAC Representatives:

D. Assenza (CPCO Representative), B. Larson (APSSP Representative), L. Jemmott (OECTA Representative)

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

Vice Chair Heeney called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m., offered the opening prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1.5. Approval of the Agenda

Motion:

SS-2022-11-08-01

Approval of Agenda

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

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by A. Massis.

CARRIED

1.6. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

Motion:

SS-2022-11-08-02

Approval of the Minutes

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the Tuesday, October 4, 2022 meeting, as printed." Motion moved by J. Sorhaitz and motion seconded by J. McCafferty.

CARRIED

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Presentations

None

2.2. Discussion Items

2.2.1. Review of Special Education component of Draft Board Improvement Plan

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided an in-depth overview of the 3 Goals of the Special Education component of the Draft Board Improvement Plan:

Goal 1: To Build capacity in Mental Health, Equity, and Inclusive Education, Safe and Accepting Schools and Healthy Schools for all members of the DCDSB community.

- Develop and use equity leadership framework to guide school leaders in building their capacity and efficacy in engaging in courageous conversations and critical reflection.
- Mandatory and invitational learning opportunities (e.g., Sharing of Excellence, workshops/webinars) for staff and students to recognize and acknowledge bias and

discrimination, and reflect on how their actions and approach impact the community.

Goal 2: To ensure consistent use of evidence-informed practices, strategies, and programs.

- Learning and practical strategies related to universal design for learning and the science of reading embedded into Program Support Teacher (PST) and PST Curriculum Chair meetings each month
- Evidence-based resources highlighted to support the implementation of intervention strategies and approaches to support students with special education needs

Goal 3: To create a positive school climate that supports students' feelings of belonging and safety.

- Develop a learning plan grounded in the dignity of the human person on how to be anti-racist, using key equity and mental health resources including School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) to support mental health and well-being of Black and racialized students
- Engage Equity Leads (one educator from each school) and principals and vice-principals in learning about culturally responsive education in the classroom, providing strategies and resources to bring back to their classrooms and schools

2.2.2. Special Education Review Update

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided an update on the recent self-assessment days facilitated by the Abilities Centre where approximately 50 staff from various departments and partners met to discuss and review board practices.

This was an opportunity for reflection, taking a look at how all the different aspects of an organization support service delivery and the importance of a common understanding of accessibility and inclusion.

2.3. Business arising from previous meeting

2.4. Staff Reports

2.4.1. Student Service Report - Francesca Mosier, Michaela Evans, Susie Lee-Fernandes

F. Mosier shared the following updates:

- October's New PST Mentoring Program covered topics related to monthly tasks, procedures for requesting SEA equipment
- November Sharing of Excellence Series
 - Teaching Life Skills – participants will learn about selecting life skills, developing comprehensive strategies, and monitoring skills development
- Abilities Centre is working in two schools, All Saints and St. Joseph (Oshawa) piloting a Therapeutic Reaction in Schools (TRIS) program
- Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Working Days are happening throughout November – schools will be submitting a minimum of two SIP claims to help cover the costs of staff support to ensure the health and/or safety of students who have extraordinarily high needs
- 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.
- Autism:
 - Durham Catholic Autism Resource Team (DCART) and the Student Services Behaviour Support Specialists (BSSs) participated in the Geneva Centre Online Symposium from Nov. 2nd to the 4th. Topics included supporting students in an inclusive classroom, Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) in the school environment, and Improving students' physical activity and movement breaks.
 - After-school social skills programs are up and running in-person and online, including Friendship Lab, Secret Agent Society and PEERS
- Project SEARCH:
 - Presentations on Project SEARCH will be delivered to the following groups of teachers during November: Program Support, Guidance, Co-op and Student Success
 - Our business host site will be the Municipality of Durham Region Headquarters
 - Our employment service partner is the Abilities Centre

- The Abilities Centre is in the process of writing an application for a Skills Development Grant to secure funding for the two Skills Trainers
- Looking for people from businesses within the community to serve on our Business Advisory Committee
- Goals of the Business Advisory Committee:
 - to broaden opportunities available to Project SEARCH graduates, across a variety of industries, to become successfully employed in a wide range of fields to further educate business professionals about the benefits of employing individuals with disabilities

Please reach out to Christine Congrady (christine.congrady@dcdsb.ca) if you have any contact information of businesses who might make good champions for our Business Advisory Committee

Dr. M. Evans shared the following Mental Health update:

On October 13th & 14th, 25 staff attended the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). 330 gatekeepers have been trained to date and 100% of Social Work staff have completed 3 modules of Suicide Risk Assessment and Management with Youth through School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO).

Upcoming Training:

November 18 - Foundations of Early Identification and Support- for support staff through SMHO

November 29 - Sharing of Excellence-Engaging Youth in Mental Health and Anti-Stigma Initiatives

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes reported that:

- The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) education staff returned to work on Nov. 8th. Communication went out to students, families and partners (e.g., child care programs), regarding the return to regular school operations.
- Community Use of Schools permits have resumed.
- School boards may apply for the Special Incident Portion Process (SIP) funding to partially offset the costs of staff support to ensure the health and/or safety of students with extraordinarily high need

- SIP process is resuming this year and the reports are due to the Ministry on December 16, 2022
- Ministry has provided the required documents/templates
- Scheduled training sessions with Program Support Teachers (PSTs) and 7 working days to work on these submissions

Motion:

SS-2022-11-08-03

Approval of the November 8, 2022, verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the November 8, 2022 meeting.”

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by J. McCafferty.

CARRIED

2.5. Association Reports

None

2.6. Correspondence

None

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion:

SS-2022-11-08-04

Motion to Adjourn

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of November 8, 2022 adjourn.”

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

CARRIED

3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 @ 7:30 pm

3.3. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by Vice Chair W. Heeney

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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