



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2018

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, November 7, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. in the Father Burns csc Boardroom at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m. by Vice-Chair Murphy.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

Opening Prayers were led by Vice-Chair Murphy.

2. Roll Call

Members	Affiliations	Present	Excused	Absent
Anna Racine	The Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario		✓	
Karen Murphy	Autism Ontario Niagara Region	✓		
Pina Palombo	Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara)	✓		
Bill Helmeczi	Pathstone Mental Health		✓	
Michael Jacques	Community Living Welland Pelham	✓		
Dorothy Harvey	Niagara Children's Centre	✓		
Rita Smith	Community Living Port Colborne/Wainfleet	✓		
Ted Nangle	Learning Disabilities Association – Niagara	✓		
Trustees				
Pat Vernal		✓		
Maurice Charbonneau			✓	
Student Senate Representative				
Donald Hingston		✓		

The following staff were in attendance:

Pat Rocca, Superintendent of Education; **Denice Robertson**, Principal, Secondary; **Tina DiFrancesco**, Recording Secretary

Introductions

Vice-Chair Murphy introduced Ted Nangle, new primary SEAC representative from the Learning Disabilities Association Niagara Region.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Dorothy Harvey
Seconded by Pina Palombo

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of November 7, 2018.

CARRIED

4. Disclosure of Interest

No Disclosures of Interest were declared with any items on the agenda.

5. Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of October 3, 2018

Moved by Pina Palombo
Seconded by Rita Smith

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of October 3, 2018 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

C. VISIONING

1. Goals and Vision for 2018-2019

1.1 Goals and Vision for the 2018-2019 School Year

Vice-Chair Murphy reviewed the following SEAC goals with the members.

1. Dr. Sheila Bennett - Presentation
2. Hold a SEAC meeting at a school
3. Develop a Transition Survey relating to the transition process in schools

Superintendent Rocca has contacted Dr. Sheila Bennett regarding a future presentation. Denice Robertson, Principal, Lakeshore Catholic High school has offered her school to hold a future SEAC meeting.

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 3, 2018

1. **Learner Advocacy**

2. **Parent Outreach**

2.1 **ProGrant Event** – awaiting more information.

3. **Program and Service Recommendations**

4. **Special Education Budget**

5. **Annual Review, Special Education Plan**

6. **Other Related Items**

7. **Policy Review**

The following policies were presented for review.

Transportation and School Operations for Inclement Weather Policy (500.1)

Employee Attendance During Inclement Weather and Workplace Closure Policy (201.9)

Student Senate – Secondary Policy (100.6.1)

Student Senate – Elementary Policy (100.6.2)

Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medication Conditions Policy (NEW)

Feedback can be submitted to jennifer.pellegrini@ncdsb.com by January 11, 2019

E. SEAC REPORT

1. **Review and Approval of SEAC Insert for Catholic School Council Agenda**

- Information is being sent to Principals regarding the change in start time for all Niagara Catholic Special Education Advisory Committee Meetings from 7:00p.m. to 6:30p.m.

2. **Review and Approval of SEAC Insert for School Newsletters**

- Same as noted above

F. AGENCY REPORTS

1. Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara) – Pina Palombo

- Celebrating DS Awareness week of November 1 – 7, 2018. Created by the Canadian Down Syndrome Society, Canadian Down Syndrome Week will be celebrated in place of National Down Syndrome Awareness Week, every November 1-7. The Canadian Down Syndrome Society's annual "See the Ability" billboard is also unveiled to celebrate National Down Syndrome Awareness Week.
- The Halloween Party was another huge success; Great to see so many new young families again.
- Upcoming Christmas Party is going to be held at Heartland Forest this year on Sunday, December 16, 2018.
- G-MC Homies with Chromies Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 9 at the Sky zone again this year and back to Boston Pizza for pizza and a special visit from Santa.
- G-MC Homies with Chromies provided a free trip for our DS group children and adults to see the Maple Leafs. The foundation picked up the tab for all costs for bus, tickets, pizza; they had a box seat and met some of the hockey players that night.
- Cross Fit with G-MC Homies was this past Sunday, November 4 and was well attended.
- The next DS meeting has been scheduled for this coming Sunday, November 11 from 3:00p.m. – 5:00p.m.

2. The Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario – Anna Racine

- Nil Report

3. Pathstone Mental Health – Bill Helmeczi

- Nil Report

4. Community Living, Welland Pelham – Michael Jacques

- **REACTION4Inclusion** - Community Living is celebrating 10 years of this Youth Leadership Conference and share in the building of a collective vision for an inclusive Ontario. The event is being held on *March 29 and 30, 2019 at the Kingsbridge Conference Centre, King City*. For further information go to www.communitylivingontario.ca or contact ebranje@communitylivingontario.ca.
- **Together We're Better Contest 2019**. Community Living Ontario is promoting its *Together We're Better* contest and invites elementary school aged children from across Ontario to participate in a contest that promotes and raises awareness about inclusive education. Students can participate in this contest by creating a video, story or poem that shows how *Together We're Better* because students of all abilities are included. The deadline for the video, story, or poem submission is **Monday, January 28, 2019**.

5. Autism Ontario Niagara Region – Karen Murphy

- Autism Ontario Niagara Region Chapter welcomes Dawn Tuckwell as Chapter Manager. She can be reached at chaptermgr.niagara@autismontario.com, 905-682-2776 Ext 201.

- A provincial survey was conducted in October asking participants (parents, caregivers, adults with autism) to rank in priorities the top five. Transitions from school (whether it was elementary to secondary or transitioning out of secondary school was fourth and the number one concern was inadequate educational support.
- A new website will be launching soon.
- Autism Ontario is looking at the way we address autism, specifically first person terminology, with the goal of being more inclusive.
- Recreation program needs survey is delayed but will be launched short.

6. Niagara Children's Centre – Dorothy Harvey

- Niagara Children's Centre has had some organization restructuring this summer.
- School based rehabilitation services in Niagara are transitioning from our Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) to a shared model between the LHIN and the Niagara Children's Centre. OT, PT and Speech are transitioning to the Niagara Children's Centre. The LHIN oversees nursing. Looking a better integration of services.
- Looking at pathways for children with autism. McMaster Children's Hospital is the hub.
- There is a new medical clinic at the Niagara Children's Centre.
- Niagara Children's Centre will host three information nights for parents of children with special education needs who will be transitioning into Kindergarten-Year 1 in September 2019.
 - November 12, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Niagara Children's Centre
 - December 6, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Niagara Falls (4037 Longhurst Ave, Niagara Falls)
 - January 22, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in Welland (Community Living Welland Pelham)
- Trillium Grant – Education conference with keynote speaker.
- Parent talks evening continues.

7. Community Living Port Colborne/Wainfleet – Rita Smith

- All the proceeds, from this year's SMILE cookies sold at Tim Hortons (in Port Colborne) will be coming to Community Living Port Colborne - Wainfleet to help us fund children's programs (for all youth in Port Colborne). CLPCW does not receive any funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to run children's program, so we are very grateful for the funds we received from Tim Hortons. Our programs are all inclusive. Because Port Colborne has limited programming for youth, our classes are open to everyone. Currently we are offering cooking and baking programs, music lessons, swimming, bowling, drama, kids club, hip hop, teen groups and homework club.
- Our transitioning into adulthood program is also very successful. This program, requested by parents, teaches young people basic life skills that they will need as they leave school and make plans to live on their own. Such skills as cooking, grocery shopping, money management, work skills, healthy relationships, laundry, personal hygiene, maintaining a home, safety skills and much more. We also spent a week at Lakeshore Catholic High School presenting the "Living Outloud" program to these young adults. This program created by Morgan Cooper (who is also the mother of a child with an intellectual disability) is ability focused coaching and gets the young people to think about what lights them up, what their passions are and what are they going to do once their education is completed. It was very well received.

8. Learning Disabilities Association Niagara Region - Ted Nangle

- LDANR is opening registration for winter programs. With the pending programs, LDANR is repositioning our program pricing models.
- LDANR recently was advised we would be receiving a Trillium Grow Grant that will be used to grow and support Math Programming.

G. STAFF REPORTS

1. Lisa Selman – Principal, Elementary

- Nil Report

2. Denice Robertson – Principal, Secondary

- IEP's have been updated and sent home. The Special Education departments continue to welcome discussions with parents as their child's academic, social and emotional needs evolve. As we approach midterm, Educational Resource Teachers are monitoring the progress of students with Individual Education Plans and maintaining dialogue with classroom teachers in regard to accommodations outlined in the IEP.
- November 14 is Grade 9 Take Our Kids to Work Day. We look forward to hearing about our student experiences.

Blessed Trinity Secondary

- Educational Resource Teachers will meet with each Grade 9 student who is taking Religion during Semester 1 to ensure that they have a community service placement and to assist in finding one if they do not.
- Planning has begun to select students who will to travel to King City for the Reaction4Inclusion Conference on March 29 and 30. Thank you to Community Living for their continued support as our students glean so much from this leadership summit.
- Over the past few months, we have established new partnerships with Habitat for Humanity Grimsby who have agreed to assist us with providing co-op placements and life skills opportunities to our students. We have a student who is working there daily and continues to develop hands-on, real world skills to prepare him for the transition from secondary school.
- NEW LISTENING CENTER – we have discovered a vast array of discarded audio equipment that we have repurposed into a listening center here in our classroom. Books with accompanying CDs have proven to be very popular in class and now students have the opportunity to put on one of multiple headphones and experience the same story as their peers simultaneously.
- WRESTLING – three of our students have expressed an active interest in joining our Wrestling Team here at Blessed Trinity. Tryouts are occurring in early November. Blessed Trinity hosts a very large wrestling tournament each year in the spring.
- FILM – several of our students have embarked on the study of film in a unit that was developed as part of the Social Skills Development course. Students are studying genres, characters, cinematography and have engaged in some lively classroom discussions involving the importance of the mass media and the role that it plays in all of our lives.

Denis Morris

- Two teams will compete at the Special Olympics basketball-qualifying tournament on November 2.
- Grade 8 students will be visiting on November 14 and those students with individual needs will be taking part in both the large group activities, as well as smaller, personalized visits.
- Students in Special Education are being supported daily individually, in small groups and in the classroom setting. Educational Resource Teachers are making regular visits to the culinary classroom, assisting in the preparation and culmination of a variety of delicious dishes.
- Our Capacity Building Series for October addressed students with Down Syndrome. We provided staff with an article regarding teaching strategies and supports designed to help our students with Down Syndrome.

Holy Cross

- Our class is experiencing the change of seasons with various autumn activities. Two of our graduates attended the retreat at Heartland Forest. After a beautiful day of reflection, hikes and low rope activities, they returned with 15 pumpkins for their classmates to decorate this Halloween.
- Several of our students will be participating in an after school Cooking is Cool program in the coming weeks. ABA strategies will be utilized to help students understand kitchen safety, read recipes and prepare meals in an organized and supportive environment. Students who require it will use visual schedules and augmentative devices to assist them. It will take place in the Holy Cross-culinary kitchen with our own Chef.
- In addition, our students have been actively involved in our school's pilgrimage for our sister school in Haiti. From raising pledges to sorting envelopes to embarking on the walk, we came together to support those in need.

Lakeshore Catholic

- This week our class is creating an inclusive random act of kindness banner.
- Our Special Education class has assumed full responsibility of the school's vending machine services. Students are really enjoying the learning opportunities, which include stocking product, reviewing supply/demand, counting revenue/profits, and customer service.
- New fine motor skills craft activities have become very popular with our kids.
- In recent weeks, many of our students have participated in class trips, e.g., Niagara Falls (photography & geography), Grade 9 Retreat, & SNAP.
- Many of our students dressed up for Halloween and participated in the student council haunted house activity.

Notre Dame College

- Swim team has begun and we have four students who will be competing this year. We are looking forward to our first meet on Thursday. November 15.
- Several students from the Special Education area, their families and friends joined us on Pilgrimage Sunday. Their donations and commitment, and enthusiasm were all part of a wonderful day.

Saint Francis

- We have begun to plan for our Special Education Christmas event at Saint Francis, which will take place on December 13. We are very excited to host this bi-annual event once again this year! Our event will include Christmas crafts, Christmas music and a Christmas dance. We look forward to seeing as many Special Education Classroom students and staff from the seven other high schools as possible on December the 13 at Saint Francis!

Saint Michael

- TAY meeting and Special Class IPRCs were held in October to ensure that students are appropriately placed.
- We have met with an architect to redesign our Special Education Class. We look forward to seeing his plans. The changes will allow for an additional quiet room and change our kitchen into a "teaching kitchen", one that is open to the classroom.
- Our school staff is continuing the transition to G suite and google classroom. This is particularly beneficial to Special Education students as they can see announcements, review missing notes, get reminders from teachers and have access to Google Read and Write for all of their work.

Saint Paul

- Our three new staff members have acclimated very well in their new roles. As well, our three new students have made a nice, smooth transition to the high school environment.
- On Wednesday, October 10, Saint Paul hosted this area's Special Olympics Soccer qualifier at Mitchelson Park. Our unified team went undefeated (4-0); we will find out in the spring if we qualified for the provincial championships.
- Our students hit the ground running in their courses and are already doing great things! Our students in the Culinary Class are responsible for making muffins (and other baked goods) for the school's breakfast program. We have a couple of senior students who are completing a variety of life-skills tasks around the school (e.g., delivering messages, photocopying, recycling, filling water bottles, etc.).

3. Pat Rocca – Superintendent of Education

- Nomination letters from agency representatives to join the SEAC for the 2018-2022 term of office are being accepted.
- Superintendent Rocca thanked Pat Vernal for all her support as a Niagara Catholic Trustee.
- Superintendent Rocca is requesting feedback from the SEAC members on various questions. More information to follow at the December meeting.

4. Jim Di Gioia – Coordinator Special Education

Report Submitted

- The Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Supervisors launched Student Support's latest afterschool program for students on the Autism spectrum this past Tuesday. The program is a six-week Cooking Is Cool program being held at Holy Cross Catholic Secondary under the direction of the Chef, Holy Cross's culinary instructor. Eleven students from Holy Cross Catholic and Saint Francis Catholic Secondary are enrolled in the program that targets developing socialization and life-skill development for students living with ASD. The

program is funded through the Ministry of Education. The current after-school program, Beats and Bots, combining music and robotics, is wrapping up in Niagara Falls this week as well.

- Student Support staff have helped facilitate over 250 referrals for students in Kindergarten Year 1 to Speech Services Niagara Speech and Language screening program. Based on their level of need, these students will receive screening and/or speech therapy blocks before they turn five years of age. Kindergarten Teachers and Early Childhood Educators, alongside their school Educational Resource Teacher worked to identify students who may benefit from early intervention therapy.

H. TRUSTEE REPORTS

1. Pat Vernal – Trustee

- Monitoring the budget.
- Working on system priorities.
- Working on a survey that started last spring, in preparation to send out to all stakeholders.

2. Maurice Charbonneau – Trustee

- Nil Report

I. STUDENT REPORT

1. Donald Hingston – Student Senate Representative

- The Ontario Catholic Student Leadership conference held in October went very well. The keynote address was by a Catholic rap artist.
- Student Senate have made changes to their policy regarding elections and have added a Community Representative on the Student Senate.

J. NCPIC REPORT

- Nil Report

K. ALLIANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

L. NEW BUSINESS

1. Learner Advocacy

2. Parent Outreach

3. Program and Service Recommendation

4. Special Education Budget
5. Annual Review, Special Education Plan
6. Other Related Items
7. Policy Review

M. CORRESPONDENCE

1. A letter was received from the Upper Grand District School Board requesting that the Ministry of Education amend the Education Act so that every board shall promote awareness and understanding of permanent brain injury resulting from prenatal alcohol exposure, including best practices to support pupils who may have FASD.
2. A letter was received from the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board regarding the Special Education funding model.

N. QUESTION PERIOD

O. NOTICES OF MOTION

P. AGENDA ITEMS – DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Sheila Bennett – future presentation.
Superintendent Rocca has contacted Dr. Sheila Bennet regarding a future presentation.
2. Living Outloud - presentation
Rita Smith, Community Living Port Colborne/Wainfleet suggested a future presentation.

Q. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. The annual SEAC Dinner will start at 6:00p.m. prior to the December 5th meeting.

R. NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 6:30p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre

S. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Michael Jacques

Seconded by Trustee Vernal

THAT the November 7, 2018 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 7:30p.m.
