



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2019

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 6:30 pm in the Father Burns csc Boardroom at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland.

Chair, Anna Racine, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

- Opening Prayers were led by Chair, Anna Racine

2. Roll Call

Members	Affiliations	Yes	Excused
Harvey, Dorothy	Niagara Children's Centre	✓	
Helmecci, Bill	Pathstone Mental Health		✓
Howcroft, Andrew	Community Living Welland Pelham	✓	
Murphy, Karen	Autism Ontario Niagara Region	✓	
Nangle, Ted	Learning Disabilities Association – Niagara	✓	
Palombo, Pina	Down Syndrome Caring Parent (Niagara)	✓	
Racine, Anna	Community Member	✓	
Smith, Lorraine	Mainstream	✓	
Smith, Rita	Community Living Port Colborne/Wainfleet	✓	
Burkholder, Rhianon	• Board Trustee – Thorold/Merritton		✓
Burtnik, Kathy	• Board Trustee – St. Catharines	✓	
Willett, Adeline	• Student Senate Representative		✓
Kerho, Chris	• Principal, Elementary		✓

The following staff members were in attendance:

Pat Rocca, Superintendent of Education, **Jim Di Gioia**, Coordinator – Special Education, **Adele Filice** Vice Principal - Secondary, **Vincent Mancuso** - ABA and **Jennifer Lanese**, Recording Secretary.

All attendees introduced themselves and provided a brief description of their organization and/or job description/role.

3. Approval of the Agenda

- Moved by Rita Smith
- Seconded by Karen Murphy

THAT THE Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Agenda of the Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **November 6, 2019**.

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 of October 2, 2019

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Ted Nangle

THAT THE Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **October 2, 2019** as presented.

CARRIED.

B. PRESENTATIONS

- Terri Pauco presented to the group that our parishes are encouraging new parishioners.
- This is a new initiative to encourage children with special needs as well as adults with special needs to attend mass.
- Terri Pauco is currently working on the narratives to help achieve this undertaking.
- The priests and pastoral team have been receiving training to help achieve this.
- Terri Pauco has researched the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for insight.
- Terri Pauco along with her team are exploring the use of pew *cue-cards* to help parishioners participate during the mass.
- A Question and Answer period followed this discussion regarding the Religious Education experience for Niagara Catholic students with special needs.
- Adele Filice also stated that all of the courses offered in our Secondary schools, a religious component is infused in the curriculum.
- Terri Pauco reminded the group that education of faith should not stop once the student graduates. It needs to continue into adulthood. The onus lies on the Church to encourage parishioners to attend weekly and not only on Christmas and Easter.
- Kathy Burtnik reminded the group that parents should not view those courses as a formal religious instruction, but rather formed in their faith.

C. VISIONING

- Nil Report

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 2, 2019

1. Nomination for NCPIC representative
 - Anna Racine explained the role of a SECA Member at the NCPIC meetings.
 - Anna Racine outlined to the group the schedule of the NCPIC meetings for this School Year. Anna Racine also reminded the group that the next NCPIC meeting was **Thursday, November 7, 2019**, (i.e., the following evening).
 - Anna Racine motioned if any SEAC members would be interested in volunteering to represent SEAC at the NCPIC meetings.
 - None of the members showed an interest.
 - Kathy Burtnik asked if this position could be on a rotation basis. Kathy Burtnik asked the Chair if SEAC could explore having more than one SEAC member as a NCPIC representative.
 - Kathy Burtnik was interested in exploring this option. Kathy Burtnik proposed this because she felt this option might encourage more SEAC members to volunteer for this position. Kathy Burtnik further explained that another commitment for our members might be challenging given that many of our members have other commitments as well.
 - Anna Racine asked if Lorraine Smith was still available to attend the next NCPIC meeting.
 - Lorraine Smith declined as her schedule had changed since initially agreeing to be the representative at NCPIC

E. SEAC Report

- NIL Report

F. COMMUNITY AND STAFF REPORTS

1. Learning Disabilities Association – Niagara – Ted Nangle

- The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has launched *Right to Read*, a public inquiry into human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities (a reading-specific learning disability) in Ontario's public education system. The full article can be found here: http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-launches-right-read-public-inquiry
 - a. This will assess whether school boards use scientific evidence-based approaches to teaching students how to read including:
 - i. Universal design for learning
 - ii. Mandatory early screening
 - iii. Reading intervention programs (which includes phonics-based instruction)
 - iv. Effective accommodation
 - v. Psycho-educational assessments (if required)
 - b. Eight school boards have been chosen to provide a sample representation of boards across Ontario (Niagara is not included).
- LDANR's winter program applications open **Monday, November 25, 2019** at 6:00 am.
- LDANR's Trivia Night fundraiser is scheduled for **February 22, 2020**.

2. Niagara Children's Centre – Dorothy Harvey

- 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 2020.
- Special Education Coordinators will present information to parents on the transition to school

process. The meetings times and locations are as follows:

- **November 12, 2019**, 6:30 - 8:00 pm at the Niagara Children's Centre (567 Glenridge Ave., St Catharines).
- **December 6, 2019** 6:30 - 8:00 pm at Niagara Support Services (4037 Longhurst Ave., Niagara Falls).
- **January 22, 2020**, 6:30 - 8:00 pm at Community Living Welland Pelham (535 Sutherland Ave., Welland).

3. Autism Ontario Niagara Region – Karen Murphy

- The Snowflake Gala will take place on **December 7, 2019** at Amici's Banquet Hall (2740 Merrittville Hwy) in Thorold. All money raised will benefit programs and services for individuals on the spectrum. For tickets and/or information, please contact the Chapter Manager at 905 682 2776 or Chaptermgr.niagra@autismontario.com.
- Autism Ontario is having an *Apparel* sale. This year's theme is *See the Potential*. Please contact the chapter office at 905 682 2776 x 201 or at programs.niagara@autismontario.com.
- The Winter Program registrations opened up on **October 22, 2019**.

4. Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara)

- Speaker series has begun at Club Italia for Down Syndrome families. The Down Syndrome Group sponsors this free event.
- On **Sunday, September 29 2019**, the Annual GO 21 Walk was held at Heartland Forest. Even despite the rain, there were many participants and it was a very successful event.
- On **Sunday, October 6, 2019**, the Down Syndrome Group along with the G-MC Homies with Chromies Foundation rented out the movie theatre at Cineplex Odeon Theatre to watch the movie, *The Peanut Butter Falcon*.
- *The Peanut Butter Falcon* is an adventure story set in the world of a modern Mark Twain that begins when Zak (22), a young man with Down syndrome, runs away from his residential nursing home. He chases his dream of becoming a professional wrestler by attending the wrestling school, *The Salt Water Redneck*. Shia LaBeouf and Dakota Johnson both star in this remarkable movie. That afternoon, the Theatre was sold-out! Due to the generosity of the G-MC foundation and the Down Syndrome Group, this was a free event for all family members.
- On **October 26, 2019**, the Down Syndrome Group held its annual Halloween Dance Party.
- Down Syndrome awareness will run from **November 1 to November 7, 2019**.
- The next meeting for Down Syndrome Niagara will take place on **Sunday, November 10, 2019**.

5. Community Living Welland Pelham – Andrew Howcroft

- Community Living Ontario is inviting students and classes to participate in a contest where students can send individual stories or poems and classes can submit a video that show why it is better when everyone learns together including students with an intellectual or developmental disability. The intent is to promote inclusion and to continue that conversation about how a diverse class offers a better educational experience for all students.
- Winners can win some exciting prizes including resources for the classroom, a pizza party, a tablet (for individual entries) and more!
- Submissions can also be emailed to: togetherwearebetter@communitylivingontario.ca. The deadline for all submission is **Tuesday, January 28, 2020**.

G. STAFF Reports

1. Secondary Principals – Adele Filice

- Nil Report

2. Special Education – Jim Di Giolia

- Nil Report

H. TRUSTEE REPORT

- Kathy Burtnik briefly spoke about the CUPE Job Action that took place earlier this month. Kathy Burtnik also reported that the Central Agreement between the province and CUPE members has been ratified.
- Kathy Burtnik, then spoke about Ontario's drinking water quality standards that has been recently circulating in the media. Kathy Burtnik wanted to emphasize that NCDSB's drinking water complies with the province's standard.
- Pat Rocca also added that our schools have undergone a rigorous program through the Facilities Services Department in order to ensure that the Board remains in compliance with the provincial's mandatory requirements.
- Pat Rocca added that the Board is maintaining compliance by directing our sites to flush the water systems on a daily or weekly basis as needed.

I. STUDENT REPORT

- NIL Report

J. NCPIC REPORT

- NIL Report

K. ALLIANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

- No quorum that evening, therefore no motions were put forth.

L. NEW BUSINESS

1. Parent Outreach: Sub-Committees to be created.

- Pat Rocca spoke briefly about the SEAC brochure. He would like to change the language in the brochure in order to emphasize moving towards independence. Moving towards independence is one of the mandates of SEAC. SEAC also review the Board policies and the Board reports in order to make recommendations to the Board.
- Pat Rocca suggested breaking off into smaller groups (i.e., Sub-Committees). Pat Rocca continued that the smaller groups would allow our members an opportunity to review the policies and reports here at the Catholic Education Centre (i.e., CEC), following our monthly SEAC meetings.
- Pat Rocca offered to open up some of the other rooms at the CEC so the sub-committees could meet separately.
- He also offered to circulate sign-up sheets for members to volunteer for the sub-committee.

- Pat Rocca suggested the following sub-committee to the group:
 - i) Communication Committee
 - ii) Policy Committee
 - iii) Ministry Reports Committee
 - iv) Survey Committee
- He asked the group for feedback and all attendees were in agreement with creating sub-committees.
- Pat Rocca promised to email the group a list of sub-committee in the upcoming weeks.

2. Accessing the SEAC Portal

- Lorraine Smith put a motion forth that she was unable to access the SEAC Portal. Lorraine Smith explained that she was having difficulties accessing the SEAC Portal.
- Pat Rocca explained to the group how to access the SEAC Portal. He explained that anyone could retrieve the minutes and the agenda from the SEAC Portal. The Board only restricts users from adding (uploading) information to the SEAC Portal.
- Pat Rocca told the group that the Board has recently launched a new look for the Board's website. The website has a very intuitive design.
- Pat Rocca offered to invite Grant Frost to come to a future SEAC meeting to discuss the capabilities of the new website to the members. Pat Rocca closed by adding that the new website has a lot new features that makes it easier for users to navigate through the different menu options.

3. Special Education Budget – Presentation in the New Year

- Pat Rocca explained that Giancarlo Vetrone, Superintendent of Business & Finance would like to be present the new budget at a future SEAC meeting. He will update the group once a date has been arranged.

4. Policy Review

- The following Policies and Administrative Guidelines are currently being reviewed as part of the cyclical Policy and Administrative Guidelines Review process.
- To be considered, all submissions must identify the specific policy and include your name, phone number, address and affiliation with Niagara Catholic.
- *Anonymous or pseudonymous submissions will not be considered*
 - [Catholic Leadership Principal and Vice-Principal Selection Policy \(202.2\)](#)
 - [Religious Accommodation Policy \(100.10.1\)](#)

Please submit your feedback to jennifer.pellegrini@ncdsb.com by **November 11, 2019**.

- [Code of Conduct Policy \(302.6.2\)](#)
- [Establishment and Cyclical Review of Policies Policy \(100.5\)](#)
- [Purchasing Supply Chain Management Policy \(600.1\)](#)
- [Trustee Electronic Meetings \(Board and Committees\) Policy \(100.8\)](#)
- [Volunteering in Catholic Schools Policy \(800.9\)](#)

Please submit your feedback to jennifer.pellegrini@ncdsb.com by [January 15, 2020](#).

- Kathy Burtnik encouraged the group to review those policies that may have an interest to SEAC members.
- Jim Di Gioia explained to the group how the members could access the policies from the Board's website.
- Later Kathy Burtnik explained the process, outlining how a policy is approved by the Board.
- Pat Rocca proposed to the group, (if interested), to please send their feedback to Jennifer Lanese by **Friday, November 8, 2019**. Jennifer Lanese would then forward any submissions them to Jennifer Pellegrini in accordance with the **November 11, 2019** deadline.

M. CORRESPONDENCE

- NIL Report.

N. NOTICES OF MOTION

- Nil Report.

O. AGENDA ITEMS – DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Sheila Bennett will be invited to discuss Triad between the Home, Church and School.

P. INFORMATION ITEMS

- The members received several flyers that evening.

Q. NEXT MEETING

- **Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at 6:30 pm at the CATHOLIC EDUCATION CENTRE**
- SEAC Christmas Social to follow.
- Members were asked to please arrive at 6:00 pm as we will gather for our Christmas Social.
- SEAC meeting will commence at its usual time at 6:30 pm.

R. ADJORNMENT

- The SEAC meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm
- motioned by Andrew Howcroft
- Seconded by Lorraine Smith