



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held on **Wednesday, January 6, 2021**, at 6:30 pm Electronic Meeting in Compliance with Education Act Section 207 and Ontario Regulation 463/97 Section 5.1 (2) Public Access Phone Number: 1-647-749-124 (Tolls), Conference ID # 745 739 256

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

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayers

- Chair Racine led the opening prayers and asked the group if there were any special intentions. She offered special intentions in memory of Tina DiFrancesco on the first anniversary of her death. Tina was the former Recording Secretary of SEAC and the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Education.
- Chair Racine also offered special intentions to Kelsey Huxley's grandmother who has recently taken ill and asked the Committee Members to keep Superintendent Farrell and his family in their prayers on the recent passing of his mother.
- Chair Racine light the **Circle of Friends** Candle in memory of Tina and those recently deceased.

Meaning of Circle of Friends Candle

*The **Circle of Friends** is a **candle** holder with a legend still shrouded in great mystery. It is said that when you give the **candle** holder to a **friend**, that it will solidify your bond with that person for the rest of your lives.*

- She following with the following prayer;

We Asked

Loving Creator,

We asked for strength, and you gave us difficulties to make us strong.

We asked for wisdom, and you gave us problems to solve.

We asked for prosperity, and you gave us purpose and brains to use.

We asked for courage, and you gave us fears to overcome.

We asked for patience, and you gave us situations where we were forced to wait.

*We asked for love, and you gave us troubled people to help.
 We asked for justice, and you called us to be just and lead with integrity.
 Lord, we have received nothing that we asked for or wanted.
 And yet, we receive everything that we needed.
 For this we give thanks.*

By: Colleen Hanycz, Ph.D. incoming President at Xavier University

2. Roll Call

Members	Affiliations	Yes	Excused
Harvey, Dorothy	Niagara Children's Centre		✓
Helmeczi, Bill	Pathstone Mental Health		✓
Huxley, Kelsey	Indigenous Community Member		✓
Murphy, Karen	Autism Ontario Niagara Region Chapter	✓	
Palombo, Pina	Down Syndrome Niagara	✓	
Racine, Anna	Community Member	✓	
Smith, Lorraine	Mainstream	✓	
Smith, Rita	Community Living Port Colborne/Wainfleet	✓	
Thomas, Kerry	Community Living Welland/Pelham	✓	
Wilson, Wendy	Indigenous Community Member		✓
Zoelman, Madeline	Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region	✓	
Burtnik, Kathy	• Trustee of the Board	✓	
Huibers, Larry	• Chair of the Board	✓	
Butera, Serena	• Student Senate Representative		✓
Kerho, Chris	• Principal, Elementary	✓	
Majka, Kelly	• Vice-Principal, Secondary	✓	

Christalla (Chris) Kouroushis was an observer from NCPIC that evening. The following staff members were in attendance: **Gino Pizzoferrato**, Superintendent of Education, **Camillo Cipriano**, Director of Education, **Jim Di Gioia** - Coordinator of Student Support, **Vincent Mancuso**, Behaviour Resource Teacher, and **Jennifer Lanese**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant to Superintendent Pizzoferrato.

3. Approval of the Agenda

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Madeline Zoelman

THAT THE Special Education Advisory Committee approves the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **February 3, 2021.**

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 January 6, 2021

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Madeline Zoelman

THAT THE Special Education Advisory Committee approves the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **January 6, 2021**, as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

1. Student Support Update

- The Student Support Department continues to engage with schools and staff to support remote learning for students during the school closure. Program Resource Teachers are hosting a “Financial Literacy – Minecraft Education” Gifted Module on **February 3rd and February 4th**, in which students are invited to explore practical applications of financial like saving, investing and spending while navigating through the Minecraft world. This open-ended activity will allow students to explore how financial decisions have an impact on their lifestyle choices. The Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Team is ready to support professional development presentations and activities on the upcoming PA Day, which is scheduled for **February 12th**. Student Support Coordinators are preparing to support transition planning for students going from Grade 8 to Grade 9 by coordinating discussions between elementary schools and their associate secondary school, as well as beginning the annual assessment of needs reviews to support staffing decisions and support deployment in the coming school year.

2. Virtual Presentation

- o Keynote Speakers: Terri Pauco and Lidia Di Lorenzo
- o The topic of Discussion: Special Education and the Church: How Your Parish and Faith Can Enhance Your Child’s Well-Being

C. FUTURE MEETINGS / INFORMATION ITEMS

- Giancarlo Vetrone, Superintendent of Business and Financial Services will be providing a short presentation at March’s SEAC meeting.
- **Autism Ontario – Upcoming Events:**
 - o A parent workshop to provide information on the Assistive Devices Program (ADP). Registration will open March 1, 2021:
<https://www.autismontario.com/civicrm/event/info?id=5076&reset=1>
 - o Come celebrate World Autism Awareness Day with us virtually, on Tuesday April 6, 2021. Included in the link are suggestions for how you can celebrate as well as educator toolkits and see some creative ways that some celebrated last year:
<https://raisetheflagforautism.com/>

- Upcoming live webinars:
https://www.autismontario.com/events?custom_326=All&custom_325=All&event_type_id=17&custom_356=All.
- OAP update from February 3, 2021: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/60220/ontario-expanding-supports-for-families-of-children-with-autism>

D. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND REFLECTION

- Chair Racine offered a moment of silence and reflection.
- Chair of the Board Huibers asked the Committee Members to remember the 4 year old boy who died after sledding into the path of a vehicle in Beamsville this past week.

E. NEXT MEETING

- **Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 6:30 pm** - format to be determined based on current COVID-19 restrictions. The Committee Members would be notified by email of the format of the meeting.

F. ADJOURNMENT

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Lorraine Smith

**THAT the February 3, 2021 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.
CARRIED**

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.