



## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held on **Wednesday, February 2, 2022** 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.

Co-Chair Cipriano called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

### A. ROUTINE MATTERS

#### 1. Land Acknowledgement

- Jim Di Gioia, Student Support Coordinator read the Land Acknowledgement.

#### 2. Opening Prayers

- Chair Cipriano read an opening prayer.

#### 3. Roll Call

Members	Affiliations	Yes	Excused
Cipriano, Madeline	Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region	✓	
Harvey, Dorothy	Niagara Children's Centre		✓
Kelly, Tara	Pathstone Mental Health	✓	
Murphy, Karen	Autism Ontario Niagara Region Chapter	✓	
Palombo, Pina	Down Syndrome Niagara		✓
Racine, Anna	Community Member		✓
Shawano, Willow	Indigenous Representative		✓
Smith, Lorraine	Mainstream	✓	
Smith, Rita	Community Living (Port Colborne/Wainfleet)	✓	
Somma, Monique	Community Living (Welland/Pelham)	✓	
Burtnik, Kathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Trustee of the Board</b></li> </ul>	✓	
Sicoli, Dino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Trustee of the Board</b></li> </ul>	✓	
Butera, Serena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student Senate Representative</b></li> </ul>	✓	
Filice, Adele	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Principal, Secondary</b></li> </ul>		✓
Walsh, Susy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Principal, Elementary</b></li> </ul>	✓	

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

**4. Election of Co-Chair**

- Monique Somma was acclaimed as Co-Chair.

**5. Approval of the Agenda**

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Serena Butera

**THAT** THE Special Education Advisory Committee approves the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **February 2, 2022**.

**CARRIED**

**6. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

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

**7. Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee of January 12, 2022.**

- Moved by Karen Murphy
- Seconded by Rita Smith

**THAT** THE Special Education Advisory Committee approves the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **January 12, 2022**, as presented.

**CARRIED**

**B. PRESENTATION**

**1. Virtual Presentation**

- Keynote Speaker: Dave Peirce, from the Niagara FASD Coalition
- Topic of Discussion: FASD in the Classroom: Working Together for Success
- The presentation took place at 7:00 pm after the February meeting was adjourned.

**C. AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. Review of PPM #81**

- Chair Cipriano opened the floor for discussion.
- Due to the complexity of this item, it was decided to continue the discussion of this topic next month.
- To access the Policy/Program Memorandum #81 from the Ministry of Education, please click [here](#).

**2. Annual Review of the Special Education Plan**

- Jim DiGioia provided the Committee Members with information to explain the process.
  - **The Historical context of School Board Special Education Plans:**
    - Regulation 306 of the Ontario Education Act requires every School Board to maintain a

Special Education Plan. Special Education Plans are meant to ensure greater accountability in the area of special education, as well as describing province-wide standards that School Boards must meet when developing their Special Education Plans. Annually, School Boards are required to make their plan available to the ministry as well as make it publically accessible. Niagara Catholic's most recent Special Education Plan is available, please click [here](#).

- For further information on the purpose of the Special Education Plans and School Boards' requirements for compliance with plan standards, please click [here](#).
- Special Education Plan Standards that directly relate to SEAC include the following:

➤ **The Board's Special Education Advisory Committee:**

The Board's Special Education Advisory Committee provides details of the operation of the Board's SEAC to the ministry and gives members of the public information to which they are entitled regarding names and affiliations of members, meeting times and location, a contact address, telephone number and/or e-mail address for each member, procedures for selecting members, and where applicable, a note that a School Board has a membership to represent the interests of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students.

- The plan must provide a description of ways in which the Board's SEAC fulfilled its roles and responsibilities during the school year in which the plan was developed. The roles and responsibilities of the SEAC are as follows:
  - i. making recommendations to the Board with respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional students within the Board
  - ii. participating in the Board's annual review of its Special Education Plan
  - iii. participating in the development of the Board's annual budget for special education
  - iv. reviewing the financial statements of the Board as they relate to special education
- The plan must also include a description of ways in which parents and other members of the public can make their views known to the SEAC.

➤ **The Board's Consultation Process:**

In developing and modifying their Special Education Plan, Boards must take into consideration issues and feedback from members of the community such as parents, members of school councils, community organizations, and students. This public consultation, which takes place with the assistance of the Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), must be maintained on a continuous basis throughout the year.

➤ **Guiding questions for SEAC input regarding annual review of the Special Education Plan:**

- i. Does the Special Education Plan answer questions that parents have? Is it easy to understand?
- ii. Is it handed out annually to every parent of a child with Special Education Learning needs?
- iii. Is the plan and supporting resources readily accessible?

### 3. **SEAC Sub-Committee Updates**

#### **a) Communication Committee**

- No update to report.

#### **b) Survey Committee**

- No update to report.

#### **c) Ministry Reports Committee**

- No update to report.

#### **d) Policy Committee**

- Monique Somma created a template using Google Docs for Committee Members to submit feedback on any Policy that was up for review.
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato thanked Monique for creating and sharing the template for all Committee Members to access.
- Jennifer Lanese emailed to the Committee Members the link for the Google Docs template.
- The Committee Members were reminded via the Chat that the deadline to update the template was **February 15<sup>th</sup>**.

#### **e) Policy Review**

- The following Policies and Administrative Guidelines are currently being reviewed as part of the [Establishment and Cyclical Review of Policies Policy, Policy No. 100.5](#) 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.
  - [Accessibility Standards Policy 800.8](#)
- Please submit your feedback to [Monique Somma](#) by **February 15, 2022**, before 12:00 pm.

### **D. NCPIC REPORT**

- Chair Cipriano read the NCPIC Report provided by Yvonne Anderson.
- At the NCPIC meeting of **January 13<sup>th</sup>**, the Behaviour Resource Teachers from Student Support Services presented the "Tier One Behaviour Resource Guide: "Who do you say I am?"
- The presentation was well received by all members of the NCPIC for their commitment to Niagara Catholic students, their evangelization, and sharing what it means to be Catholic and Christian.
- Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that Niagara Catholic has a new Mission Statement focusing on our Catholic identity: *"We are a Christ-centered Catholic faith community that celebrates diversity and fosters spiritual growth, inspiring all to reach their full potential in mind, body and spirit"* and the new Vision Statement, *"Encountering souls and opening minds so that all*

*students succeed,”* clearly defines what we do as Catholic educators to support all students.

- Director of Education Cipriano reviewed the Niagara Catholic Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and System Priorities and thanked the NCPIC for their participation in the process.
- The 2022-2023 School Year Calendar Consultation Process and feedback template were provided to NCPIC members. Members were encouraged to submit their feedback/comments on the proposed draft elementary and secondary calendars no later than 4:00 pm on **Tuesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**, to Yvonne Anderson. All feedback received will be submitted to Jennifer Pellegrini on **Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**, on behalf of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee for consideration by members of the Niagara Catholic School Year Calendar Committee.
- Faith Formation and Goals/Parent Engagement Events Subcommittee Meetings have been scheduled for **January 27<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00 pm.
- Upcoming Presentations at NCPIC Meetings:
  - o **March 3, 2022**
    - The “unlearn” organization will present bias, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, in order to support safe, caring and inclusive learning environments.
  - o **May 5, 2022**
    - PRO Life Speaker, Father Thomas Lynch, National President of Priests for Life Canada has been booked for a virtual presentation and Q&A.
- We are still appealing for a Committee Member to represent SEAC at the NCPIC meetings. If you’re interested in volunteering, please email Jennifer Lanese.
- Yvonne Anderson will be providing the group with an update until a Committee Member volunteers to represent SEAC at the NCPIC’s meetings.

## **E. NOTICES OF MOTION**

- There were no Notices of Motion.

## **F. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- The LDANR has begun its Winter program season. They have postponed both SOAR programs to the Spring to allow more time for program promotion. Applications for these Spring programs, as well as our Reading Rocks Spring site, will open in March. They will be opening their SLAM Summer Camp applications on February 28th at 6:00 am and are hoping to be able to offer one in-person site in Niagara Falls and one in-person site in St. Catharines. They are offering a webinar on February 9th at 6:00 pm discussing various tax credits related to their learning disability and special education community such as the Disability Tax Credit. To register for this webinar, and to stay informed with future webinars, please register and subscribe on their Eventbrite page using this link [here](#).

- Congratulations go to Julian Caverley, a student from Denis Morris CHS, (i.e., DM) who has been accepted into the CICE Program at Niagara College in September. Julian has been a student at DM for seven years and he will be missed. He has also joined the newly formed Niagara Sledge Hockey League. He travels throughout the Niagara region representing the St. Catharines' team. Isabella Taraba and Cloe Calder, (also DM students) have really enjoyed taking the Hairstyling course at the Launch Center in Welland this semester. They are gaining important life skills. Many of the students in the class are looking forward to taking the Fashion Design class second semester as well as a new Horticulture class that is being run out of the Niagara Parks location. They also have students who will be going to Sobey's for a co-op placement to gain work skills experience.
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato will provide the group with an update next month on **the format of our** future meetings.

#### **G. MOMENT OF SILENCE / REFLECTION OF LIFE**

- Chair Cipriano offered a moment of silence and reflection.

#### **H. NEXT MEETING**

- **Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at 6:30 pm** – Format to be determined.
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato will provide more information closer to the meeting.

#### **I. ADJOURNMENT**

- Moved by Monique Somma
- Seconded by Lorraine Smith

**THAT** the **February 2, 2022** meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

#### **CARRIED**

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm.