



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held on **Wednesday, March 9, 2022** at 6:30 pm. Electronic Meeting in Compliance with Education Act Section 207 and Ontario Regulation 463/97 Section 5.1 (2)

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

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Land Acknowledgement

- Jim DiGioia, Student Support Coordinator read the Land Acknowledgement.

2. Opening Prayers

- Chair Cipriano read an opening prayer.

3. Roll Call

Members	Affiliations	Yes	Excused	Absent
Cipriano, Madeline	Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region	✓		
Harvey, Dorothy	Niagara Children's Centre	✓		
Maxwell, Michelle	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	• Trustee of the Board	✓		
Sicoli, Dino	• Trustee of the Board		✓	
Butera, Serena	• Student Senate Representative	✓		
Filice, Adele	• Principal, Secondary		✓	
Walsh, Susy	• Principal, Elementary	✓		

Christalla (Chris) Kouroushis was an observer from NCPIC that evening. The following staff members were in attendance: **Gino Pizzoferrato**, Superintendent of Education, **Kimberly Kinney**, Superintendent of Education, **Jim Di Gioia**, Coordinator of Student Support, **Vincent Mancuso**, Behaviour Resource Teacher, **Jeffrey Maxwell**, e-Learning Consultant, **John Belcastro**, Principal – Alternative Education and **Lu Baiocco**, Recording Secretary/Temporary Administrative Assistant to Superintendent Pizzoferrato. Director of Education, **Camillo Cipriano** sent his regrets.

4. **Approval of the Agenda**

- Moved by Dorothy Harvey
- Seconded by Monique Somma

THAT THE Special Education Advisory Committee approves the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of **March 9, 2022**.

CARRIED

5. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

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

6. **Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee of February 2, 2022.**

- Moved by Rita Smith
- Seconded by Monique Somma

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

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATION

1. **Virtual Presentation**

Kimberly Kinney, Superintendent of Education
Jeffery Maxwell, Enabled Learning and Teaching Consultant
John Belcastro, Principal – NCDSB Alternative Education

- Topic of Discussion: E-Learning & Niagara Catholic
 - History of eLearning
 - eLearning classes
 - eLearning graduation requirements
 - opt out option

C. AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Discussion of Online Learning Supports and Universal Design for Learning**

Letter from Renfrew County Catholic District School Board

- Chair Cipriano feels the issue with having access to devices had been answered by the e-learning presentation
- Opt out process should be noted to bring up on September SEAC agenda

2. **Roles & Responsibilities of SEAC and its Members**

- Presentation given by Chair Cipriano & Vice-Chair Somma
 - Purpose of SEAC
 - Committee membership
 - Roles & Responsibilities
 - Board duties
 - Robert's Rule of Order and when a member does not agree with a Carried motion
 - Subcommittees for SEAC for reviewing special education sections
 - Create policies and procedures for various SEAC events
 - Nominations for agencies to be part of SEAC
 - Creating annual or term goals for SEAC
 - Co-chair Somma recommend a shared google form – SEAC feedback- that states agency, important updates and events, monthly reports and other comments
 - Form would have anything that you feel like you want on the agenda, you want to stop doing or don't think is useful any longer
- Added by Jim DiGioia, Coordinator of Student Support
 - Discussion about the Special Education Plan and SEAC
 - Outlines procedures for selecting members for SEAC
 - What qualifies as a local association

3. **Discussion of the term "Disability"**

Letter of support in relation to Bill 172 from Durham District School Board

- Chair Cipriano spoke to this
- Redefining the definition of disability within the Education Act
- Trustee Burtnik suggested having SEAC ask NCDSB to write a letter to their provincial trustees association
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato agreed with Trustee Burtnik's approach
- Dorothy Harvey put forward a motion - adopting the definition of disability as outlined by the AODA and by the World Health Organization
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato suggested that the motion reflect a desire to review the definition defined in the Education Act and move towards adopting the motion.
- Rita Smith second the motion
- All were in favour

4. **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

- No update to report

e) Policy Review

- Superintendent Pizzoferrato listed the six new policies that are up for review
 - *Religious Accommodation Policy (100.10.1)*
 - *Occupational Health and Safety Policy (201.6)*
 - *Employee Workplace Harassment Policy (201.7)*
 - *Employee Workplace Violence Policy (201.11)*
 - *Attendance Support Program Policy (201.16)*
 - *Bullying Prevention Intervention Policy (302.6.8)*

D. AGENCY REPORTS

LDANR – MADELINE CIPRIANO

- The LDANR's Spring program applications will open Monday, March 21st at 6:00 am for Reading Rocks and BEST. Families can apply on their website at www.ldaniagara.org. The LDANR will also be partnering this Spring with Niagara Catholic to offer its SOAR Secondary and Post-Secondary transition programs.

Niagara Children's Centre

- Kids helping Kids
- Helps kids shine campaign starts in May
- Parent caregiver conference April 27th
- Ontario Autism program
- Kids Ontario Scholarship

Mainstream Report

- Mainstream continues to offer virtual social groups through our zoom community. These are open to any adults in Niagara (no fee, no pre-registration).
- Secondly, we are actively planning a presentation with Tanner Stranges (DSO-Housing Navigator) to present the DSO Housing Navigator toolkit to people and their families. We will likely have satellite locations throughout the region to view the presentation (not everyone has internet access or is comfortable using technology). This will be an opportunity for people to explore the new tools that can be used with young people in planning for housing. Also an opportunity to ask questions/be informed. Stay tuned!

Community Living – (Port Colborne/Wainfleet)

- Strategic plan was held today. Going to be a lot of changes at community living Port Colborne.

Community Living – (Welland/Pelham)

- Nothing to report

Pathstone Mental Health

- Are working on plans for the new site in Niagara South, River House. Demand for services remain high.

E. STAFF REPORTS

- Jim DiGioia, Coordinator of Student Support gave presentation

Annual Special Education Plan Review

Student Support Coordinators have initiated this year's Special Education Plan review process. SEAC members are welcome to submit feedback [through this link](#).

Please share any input on the following:

- Error in SEAC member/agency information
- Clarity of information
- Inconsistency of information
- Items/Sections of the plan that are not relevant and/or inconsistent with current board practice
- Typographic or layout issue / inconsistency
- Other

Permission Click

Student Support has coordinated a professional learning opportunity for Permission Click. This PD is taking place March 9th. Participants include ERTs, Principals, Vice-Principals and secretaries. Permission Click is an online platform that manages and automates the completion of forms. Permission Click electronically sends forms to parent(s)/guardian(s) for completion, resulting in a more efficient process with faster response times. We hope this opportunity for staff will allow them to further embed Permission Click in their day to day work.

DreamBox Learning Math

Student support is pleased to announce the launch of DreamBox Learning Math. DreamBox licenses have been purchased to support students with mathematics. Student Support is working with school staff to identify students to receive a DreamBox license. Professional learning sessions are being offered to ERTs and classroom teachers on March 29th and 30th. PD will focus on DreamBox implementation and supporting students who are using the program.

Lexia Learning

Lexia Learning continues to be a focus in Niagara Catholic. Additional professional development for Principals, Vice-Principals and ERTs has been arranged for March 3rd and March 10th. Staff are welcome to join these sessions to further their knowledge of the myLexia dashboard which helps support the use of the program with the student. The next phase of professional learning is tentatively being arranged for April 2022.

Transition to Kindergarten

The transition process is underway. Student Support Coordinators begin to plan for new

students to Niagara Catholic entering Kindergarten yr. 1. Coordinators and their teams will work with support agencies, families and school staff for a successful school start.

SOAR Secondary and Post-Secondary Program

As we did last summer, Niagara Catholic is pleased to once again partner with the LDARN to offer the SOAR Secondary and Post-Secondary programs for students in gr. 7/8 and 11/12. Planning is underway. Schools and families will be notified of this opportunity in May 2022. The program will consist of evening sessions lead by an LDANR facilitator and supported by a Niagara Catholic teacher who has experience in these transitions. We look forward to our work with the LDANR and supporting students and families during this important time.

(Submitted by Jim Di Gioia, Danny Giancola, David O'Rourke, Student Support Coordinators)

- Vince Mancuso – no reports
- Superintendent Pizzoferrato spoke to the following:
 - Thanked Chair Cipriano for the prayer/context with Ukraine
 - Dorothy Harvey retirement and welcome Michelle Maxwell
 - World Down syndrome Day – March 21, 2022
 - Learning Recovery Grant issued to Niagara Catholic:
 - Funds to be spent in two portions.
 - 1. Spent by August 31
 - 2. Spent through the 2022-2023 school year.
 - This will be a welcome addition to support the evolving partnership between the Program and Innovation, and Student Support Department.
 - APRIL SEAC – Spec Ed Funding – Superintendent Vetrone
 - APRIL SEAC MEETING – Hybrid and Live-streamed
 - POLICY REVIEW: You are invited to provide feedback on the six new policies

F. TRUSTEE REPORTS

- Trustee Burtnik gave report
- Flood in high school at Holy Cross SS
- Navigating needs of special needs students
- Recommendation for redistribution of trustees
- Welcomed our new chair
- Fond farewell to Dorothy Harvey

G. STUDENT REPORT

Student Senate is working hard to prepare Mental Health week festivities during Catholic Education week. These festivities include videos displayed in every secondary classroom in the school board to educate on Mental Health, announcements to be provided to schools showcasing mental health facts and trivia questions.

Additionally, schools across the Board, including Saint Paul are advertising Down Syndrome awareness day on March 21st. Saint Paul will be selling Tie-dyed socks for \$5 dollars which will be made by the Special Education Class. All proceeds will be donated to the Down Syndrome

Association of Ontario.

H. NCPIC REPORT

Elementary Principal, Joe Tornabuono and Secondary Vice-Principal, Kevin Timmins provided elementary and secondary school updates for information.

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee will be hosting:

Niagara Catholic Virtual Family Math Events
Family Math Webinar Series with Dr. Marian Small
Session #1- K-12 Focus-Tuesday, March 29, 2022 (6:30 to 7:30 p.m.)
Session #2- K-8 Focus-Thursday, May 12, 2022 (6:30 to 7:30 p.m.)
Session #3-Gr. 7-12 Focus-Wednesday, June 1, 2022 (6:30 to 7:30 p.m.)

Virtual Family Math Night-Wednesday, April 27, 2022 (6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) Focus: Using games to support mathematics learning (K-6)
Participating families will receive math games kits ahead of the family math night
Two rotations with choice of session to attend (by grade and topic)
Families keep the math games kits and have an opportunity to win other family math prizes.
Note: A poster with further details and a registration link will be sent to all parents/guardians.

A Synod Learning Session will take place on April 25, 2022 for all Catholic School Councils and parents/guardians. Further details to follow.

The NCPIC Meeting of May 5, 2022 will be rescheduled to support the Niagara Catholic Celebrating Excellence Award Ceremony on May 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Niagara Falls Convention Centre.

I. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion.

J. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Bill 172 Support Letter – Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board
2. Nursing Shortage Support Letter – Renfrew County Catholic District School Board
3. COVID-19 Protocols Letter – Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
4. Nomination for new Niagara Children's Centre SEAC Representative
5. Review of PPM 81 – timelines - Letter from Durham District School Board

K. MOMENT OF SILENCE / REFLECTION OF LIFE

Chair Cipriano offered a moment of silence and reflection.

L. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 6:30 pm - Hybrid

M. ADJOURNMENT

- Moved by Dorothy Harvey
- Seconded by Lorraine Smith

THAT the **March 9, 2022** meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.