



**Northeastern
Catholic District**
SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, November 30, 2016

11:45 a.m.

Northeastern Catholic District School Board

MINUTES

PRESENT: Kay Gaffney, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services / Chair
Joel McCartney, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre / Vice-Chair
Geneviève Lemieux, Canadian Mental Health Association
Kim Bordignon, Children's Treatment Centre
William (Bill) Russell, The Lord's Kitchen
Natalie Parnell, Timmins Family Counselling Centre
Fred Salvador, NCDSB Trustee
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Judy Piché, Education Services Officer / Recorder

EXCUSED: Val Toner, Community Living Timmins
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Elizabeth King, NCDSB Trustee

GUEST: Melissa Lavoie, Special Assignment Teacher – Education Technology

1. Welcome and Prayer

Chair Kay Gaffney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: F. Salvador
SECONDED BY: J. McCartney

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.
CARRIED.



3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: N. Parnell
SECONDED BY: F. Salvador

THAT the minutes of October 26, 2016 be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

4. Walk With Us

Special Assignment Teacher for Education Technology, Melissa Lavoie, provided a powerpoint presentation and explained a project she has been working on with several First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education (FNMI) students entitled Walk With Us (WWU). Walk With Us has increased opportunities for participation of FNMI students in student voice, student engagement, and peer-to-peer mentoring activities. Melissa explained that the group of students gather weekly during lunch, where they learn skills from a variety of partners to inform their content – the virtual tours of their communities. The project began with 8 students in September and there are now 23 students in the club. Some students realized that their community was not represented in Google Street View so on November 1st, 16 students participated in their first 360° image capture of Mattagami First Nation. Another event brought a group of high school students together and they created a presentation about the youth suicide crisis in Attawapiskat First Nation. The students are able to share stories about their upbringing, culture, and traditions, and to discuss the issues that affect them. This will also serve as a digital archive available for public access and reference, where WWU hopes to increase awareness of some of the challenges indigenous communities face, and foster hope in the connections created in order to spread positive messaging and resilience. The club endeavors to complete 360° image captures in the indigenous communities including Peawanuck, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat, Constance Lake, Moosonee, Moose Factory, as well as Mattagami First Nation. Melissa mentioned that the students are also building self-confidence and well-being and are learning appropriate use of technology and social media. She started blogging about it and connected the blog to Twitter and Google. She is also collaborating with many WWU partners, such as Canadian Geographic, Google Earth Outreach, CX 360o, digital Human Library, and many more. A photographer based in Tennessee is also helping to create a teacher guide for free.

Melissa received a grant in the amount of \$4,000 from Ontario Teachers' Federation Teacher Learning Co-op program to help with the cost of teacher release time, travel expenses to various communities, and technological equipment. The Ministry of Education invited school boards to submit proposals (up to a maximum of \$10,000) to build capacity within their schools and communities to address racism in all its various types and systemic forms, e.g. anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Indigenous racism. Melissa applied and is hoping to receive the funding to assist with the project's release costs, resources, and/or speakers. She added that she is also applying for a \$750,000 grant to help with this project. Melissa is looking into establishing a Walk With Us bursary and is also hoping to attend a learning and designing conference in Belgium, if the proposal is approved. The presentation will be sent electronically to the members and posted on the board's website.

5. **Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. **Managing Information for Student Achievement Professional Network Centres (MISA PNC) Project**

Daphne Brumwell reported that the Board has been approved once again this year for a grant worth \$15,000 to support our on-going work with touch technology and our special needs students. With the introduction of Chromebooks last year, we saw an increase in the number of resource teachers and principals who were advocating for our Special Education students to receive their own Chromebook rather than the iPad. Upon reflection, we realized that this was due to the kinds of tasks students were being given to do. She mentioned that if you need to word process, a Chromebook is definitely the preferred piece of technology; however, if we are truly supporting our special education students to make their thinking visible using technology, it is much more than typing or dictating a response. We realized that math would be a good place to leverage the iPads as math does not lend itself well to typing out your thinking. In year one of this project, we provided iPads to a few key students and watched to see the impact. In April 2015 a student from OICS, Bradley-Jack, who was very passionate about how this technology had truly changed his life at school made a presentation to SEAC. In year two, we purchased iPads for an increasing number of students, but was also able to provide iPads to the resource teachers so that they might better support the students who were using them. In 4 schools, this included a couple of classroom teachers who had an interest in the technology, but who also had a number of students with iPads in their classrooms. When provided with the opportunity for this group of educators to share their thinking last year, we were pleasantly surprised by what many of them had done with the iPads. Nonetheless, we recognized that we had not provided enough direct support to this group of educators to truly get the most out of this technology. This year, we have been able to provide an iPad to at least 2 additional classroom teachers at each school. We now have 47 educators participating in this project. Our first session with them will be on December 14th. Once we have introduced the project and provided them with an opportunity to explore the Explain Everything app that we will be focusing on, Melissa Lavoie, our SAT for Technology, will be working with students, teachers and educational assistants to help ensure they have the skills necessary to work effectively with these devices in mathematics. We will be collecting student work samples over the rest of the school year and look forward to sharing some of these with you as we move into the spring.

7. **SEAC Brochures**

The members were asked how they would like to get the SEAC brochure, that was created and introduced to them November 2015, out to our stakeholders. After a brief discussion, it was decided to send a hard copy of the brochure to each special education student's family in the NCDSB and post the brochure on the board website in the Special Education section.

8. Timmins School Transition Committee

Daphne Brumwell stated that NCDSB has received approval to move ahead with the consolidation of Sacred Heart School into the St. Paul School and O’Gorman Intermediate Catholic School (OICS) sites for September 2017. The St. Paul School site will house our Kindergarten to Grade 4 students, while OICS will house our Grade 5 to 8 students. With this approval came 6.7 million dollars in funding to build an addition onto St. Paul School. The addition includes 2 new daycare rooms and a cultural space. OICS will remain named as such, but St. Paul will undergo new branding. The new name of the school will be unveiled at our December 9th Board Meeting. More information will be provided to this committee on a regular basis so that the members are aware of the progress and implications of this consolidation.

9. Agency Reports

Joel McCartney reported that Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre is having difficulties trying to recruit a behaviour therapist and a psychometrist.

Bill Russell mentioned that there is an increase in the need of meals for the homeless and more have no place to stay. A portion of the church was occupied with 10 beds for the homeless. More families are going to the food bank and to The Lord’s Kitchen. Last week, Domino’s Pizza donated 110 pizzas and handed out 483 servings to 256 people.

NEOFACS is holding its annual toy drive campaign to help children, youth and families within our communities. Kay Gaffney indicated that sponsors can support the campaign several ways:

- sponsor children, youth or families
- collect an assortment of toys and either have the toys picked up or dropped off to the agency
- purchase food vouchers;
- provide monetary donations.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 11:45 a.m. at the Northeastern Catholic District School Board or via videoconference.

11. Other Business

The SEAC Chair received a copy of a letter from Near North District School Board requesting the members’ input on having a northern Ontario representative to sit at the Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) table. The members agreed to send a response letter supporting their inquiry.

12. Adjournment

MOVED BY: F. Salvador
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 12:55 p.m.
CARRIED.