



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

"Living our Catholic Faith to shape success for all of our learners"

SEAC Meeting **(Special Education Advisory Committee)**

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

11:45 a.m.

Catholic Education Centre

MINUTES

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

EXCUSED: Beth Nowak, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board
Amanda Wessman, Community Living Timmins

GUEST: Kim Meunier

1. Welcome and Prayer

Daphne Brumwell welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: E. King
SECONDED BY: B. Russell

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.
CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: E. King
SECONDED BY: N. Parnell

THAT the minutes of September 21, 2015 be approved as amended.
CARRIED.

4. Role of Attendance Counsellor

Guest speaker, Kim Meunier, explained to the members her role as Attendance Counsellor for NCDSB. She offers support to parents whose children have chronic absences and are at risk of not graduating. The age of compulsory school attendance for a student in Ontario is eighteen years old, or until the student earns the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Although most students will attend and successfully complete secondary school, a small number of students are at risk of leaving school early for a wide variety of reasons (behavioural problems, mental health issues, or problems with substance abuse). Kim meets with the students and their parents and gathers information to determine the underlying causes, builds relationships with them and helps them to overcome barriers. She also helps to educate school staff on student habits that can become attendance issues (such as chronic lateness). She connects students with the appropriate services offered by various health and community agencies. Her focus is at the secondary level; however, some students start showing signs at an earlier age.

Kim spoke about the board's Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) program, intended to re-engage young people who are not attending school and who are therefore at risk of not graduating. The board is responsible to have a non-attendance list and is expected to contact these students regularly and invite them to return to school and to offer them an alternative education program. The best treatment is to slowly integrate the students back to school.

5. Schedule of Meetings

The schedule of meetings was reviewed. The members agreed to meet on the following dates: November 25th, December 16th, January 20th, February 17th, March 9th, April 20th, May 25th, June 14th. The schedule will be posted on our website.

6. Ministry Initiatives 2015-2016

Special assignment teachers are continuing to work on the development of screening tools to help teachers identify students who are at risk in the area of number sense and numeration. We are in the process of finalizing the details for the Gr. 2 and Gr. 7 screens. Initial work on these grades proved that the tool was too comprehensive and time consuming; as a result, revisions are underway. Last year, all math teachers were trained to use a teaching strategy called *Number Talks* to support mental math instruction from Kindergarten to Grade 10. We will be providing training to our resource teachers shortly so that they can use this to support their math work with students.

This year, our *Learning for All* funds will support resource teachers in building their understanding of how the psychological processes impact achievement and what strategies might work best based on student profiles. For this year, our focus will be primarily on the LD student given that this is our largest cohort of identified students. Teachers will learn how to profile students and how to build these profiles to best support student learning.

Aboriginal education remains a key priority for NCDSB and for the Ministry of Education. The *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Board Plan for 2015-2016* will continue to help to support the oral language development of FNMI students K to 1 using specific interventions in a small-group setting. Speech and Language Pathologist, John Stark, will continue to support this initiative and will work with staff at the five schools with our highest aboriginal population.

The *Small and Northern Boards initiative* and the *Collaborative Inquiry for Learning in Mathematics (CIL-M)* initiative continue this year and will provide the opportunity for teachers to co-plan, observe lessons, and listen to students' response as they engage in various mathematics activities. This worthwhile project continues to help close the gap on student achievement in mathematics.

We are also hoping to continue with the MISA Professional Network Centre (PNC) initiative related to using touch technology to support students with special needs. Our initial work on this last year supports this focus. We have now provided each resource teacher with an iPad so that he/she can learn more about the applications that are best suited to support and augment the learning experience for this cohort of students. More to come about this initiative. It was suggested to host a workshop in Timmins facilitated by a team from Sagonaska.

The objective of the *System Implementation and Monitoring (SIM)* project continues to be a focus on small-group instruction for all students. Funding will support professional learning in all schools with a continued emphasis on helping students make their thinking visible. Emphasis will be placed on the role of Assessment FOR and AS learning to help teachers identify next steps for learning and be more precise in their teaching.

7. Early and On-Going Identification

We have made a substantial revision to the Early and On-Going Identification section of our Special Education Plan. Daphne Brumwell provided a section of the plan that deals with the tasks that need to be undertaken to ensure that we are identifying at-risk students as needed each year. She also provided a copy of the student tracking sheet used to summarize assessment results over time. This will be shared with school staff early in 2016 so that they are prepared to use the tools required to support this work. Release time will be provided to teachers to complete the Teacher-School Readiness Inventory each year.

8. Resource Revisions

Daphne Brumwell stated that the Binder of Assessment Tools for teachers has been revised. The new version was shared at the beginning of the school year. Many thanks to Amber Smith-Comé, our Special Assignment Teacher for the North, who made all the revisions. The document looks amazing and has been very well received by teachers. The Parent's Guide to Special Education in the NCDSB was also revised. The new version has been shared with schools and will be provided to the family of any newly identified student. We are also in the process of creating new support documents for parents. Catherine Hoven is currently in the process of putting the finishing touches on a brochure about the Individual Education Plan (IEP). We have plans to continue with these types of resources for things such as Assistive Technology, Autism Support Services, Literacy Intervention, Math Intervention, etc. They will be shared once they're finished. A short pamphlet about SEAC that can be shared with school councils will be created. Our hope is to have this ready for the November school council meetings.

9. Professional Learning Plan 2015-2016

This school year's Professional Learning Plan was provided. Teachers and educational assistants will be working on their School Improvement Plans on the November 9th Professional Activity Day. Release days will be provided to create profiles of the students with learning disabilities prior to the Christmas holiday. Teachers will complete report cards on January 29th while educational assistants will work on student profiles – understanding the learning disabled student. Teachers will meet again before the March Break to go over the impact of the student profiles – understanding the psychological processes. At the April 11th Professional Day, teachers will be working with an international expert in the area of assessment, Sandra Herbst. EAs will receive Understanding & Managing Aggressive Behaviour (UMAB) training. Teachers and resource teachers will receive support between April and May in the area of Individual Education Plans. The teachers will once again complete report cards on June 10th while educational assistants will work on tiered interventions – understanding the Special Education Model in the NCDSB.

10. Special Incidence Portion Funding

All claims submitted under the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) were approved for the 2014-2015 school year. Our allocation was \$20,816. This is significantly less than we have received in the past due to the loss of a couple of high needs students. We will begin the process for this school year in the month of November and anticipate similar figures. All claims submitted under the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) – claims-based were approved for the 2014-2015 school year. We spent \$34,927.49 and received \$30,927.49. A total of 26 claims were made this year. For our SEA Technology amount, we had \$86,403.00 to work with this year (about \$20,000 of which was a roll-over from unspent dollars last year). We spent \$81,876.95. A total of 132 claims were made this year.

11. Agency Reports

There is an increase in the number of people going to the Lord's Kitchen this year. During the last 3 weeks, between 475 and 500 servings were given in an hour and a half to approximately 250 people. Groceries are purchased with fundraising money and some are donated by grocery stores.

Joel McCartney mentioned that negotiations are beginning for OPSEU workers at Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre. The agency is struggling with several vacancies due to health leaves and it is about to engage interviews for 4 positions. There is a back log of referrals at the intake level. He added that the psychometrist position at the clinical level is still available.

VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children has created a resource entitled *A Parent's Guide to School Partnerships*, informing parents on Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC), SEAC, and supports and services for children with hearing loss.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 25, 2015 at 11:45 a.m. at the Catholic Education Centre or via video conference.

13. Other Business

Letters from Durham District School Board and Upper Canada District School Board were shared with the members. A letter regarding the decrease in special education funding for NCDSB will be drafted and sent to the Minister of Education, on behalf of SEAC.

It was announced that Amanda Wessman resigned from SEAC. Val Toner, Supervisor with Community Living Timmins, will replace her.

14. Adjournment

MOVED BY: J. McCartney
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 1:10 p.m.
CARRIED.