

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

January 18, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre, Wallaceburg – St. Louis Conference Room

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Community Living, Wallaceburg

Dr. Veronica Vaughan

Epilepsy Support Centre

Lianne McDowell

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effect Group

Martha Fracalanza

Lambton County Developmental Services Group

Adrian Vermeiren

Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County

Annie Sheehan

Down Syndrome Association of Lambton County

Annette Berkers

VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

Kathy Arcuri-Arnott

Trustees

Carol Bryden
Linda Ward

Principals Representatives

Maureen Cecile
Shirley Churchill

Board Advisors

Ann Sutton
Lisa Demers
Janet Boyle
Brenda Roby
Lisa Thompson-Power
Renée Zarebski

Regrets: Dr. Veronica Vaughan

Carol Bryden
SEAC Chairperson

Ann Sutton
Board Advisor

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Prayer

The meeting was called to order and led in prayer by Chair Carol Bryden.

2. Adoption of Agenda

<p>MOTION BY: Kathy Arcuri-Arnott and seconded by Martha Fracalanza to adopt the agenda.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p>
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3. Review of Minutes from November 16, 2009

<p>MOTION BY: Annie Sheehan and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott to accept the minutes from the November 16, 2009 SEAC meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED</p>
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B. PRESENTATIONS

1. South Sarnia School Buildings Architect - Randy Wilson

Four school councils have formed a joint school council. Kathy is a member of this group which is known as the Joint Parent Transition Advisory Group. This group is working to make the transition as positive as possible into the new schools.

SEAC had requested that the architect for this process be invited to speak to SEAC about the new buildings and accessibility.

Randy has experience with students who have special needs – Physical Accessibility Guidelines. Most of his practice is in the institutional area – goal is no barriers for anyone. One of the largest constraints is budget. A number of boards continue to build two level schools which require elevators and chair lifts. Both schools in Sarnia are being built are one floor.

When schools were designed, they were designed to make every area accessible. Corridors have been widened. Classrooms are at ministry standard (with some additional space).

Space is available for all people with special needs. Grading is at all entry points – tried to minimize stairs. Major entry points have accessible doors.

What adaptations have been made to washrooms for children with special needs?

Size and location of grab bars are determined by the building code, which has been met. Variety of fixtures – smaller toilets for younger students. Counters are at optimal height.

Accessible washroom has been built at St. Ben’s site. Need to check on second site.

What about acoustics? Using new acoustic treatments. Designed to be absorptive to reduce feedback. Gymnasium will have acoustic blocks. Assistive listening devices in gym – board will purchase for individual classroom use. For computers – will have plug-in and wireless

Lighting newest level of T-5 fixtures. Plan has allowed for as much natural light as possible

Energy use will be quite low – better window frames.

Flooring in hallway – large porcelain tile. Have factored in slip resistance and ability to maintain cleanliness. Planning has had to take into account full day learning

Randy expressed a great pleasure in working with the people involved – friendly and collaborative.

Construction updates are posted on the website and updated weekly. Very high parent satisfaction with the plan.

Are railings in the hallway – No, hallways have benches and cubbies and are extra wide to accommodate the flow of traffic

C. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Trustees Linda Ward
Linda highlighted discussion with OCSTA regarding the lack of funding for Catholic Education. Many Catholic boards are over budget. Mental Health needs more recognition. MACSE – will have a teleconference at the end of the month. MACSE is looking at funding for Special Education.

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Request from St. Clair Child and Youth Centre Ann Sutton
Concerns about lack of funding for children’s mental health services for children. SEAC needs to decide whether to compose a letter to send to Dalton McGuinty.
Motion made to write a letter. Ann will compose a letter for the Chair to submit on behalf of SEAC.

MOTION BY: Adrien Vermeiren and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott that a letter of support be drafted and signed by the SEAC Chair to support the SCCYC request about lack of funding for children’s mental health services. This letter will be sent to Dalton McGuinty.

CARRIED

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Equity & Inclusion Consultations Ann Sutton
On June 26th PPM 119 was received by boards on Equity and Inclusion. There is a 4 year plan to address equity and inclusion in our board and schools. There is a link between success at school and the school’s learning environment. The Ministry has provided definitions for diversity, equity and inclusive practices which come from the Human Rights Code. The board must develop a policy with a vision, guiding principals, three goals, eight areas of focus etc. These were reviewed with SEAC. Increased equity and inclusion lead to better academic results. The policy has to be developed by September 2010. We are in year two of the plan. Legislation and policy context were reviewed. Code – ministry is stating that students need to have the right to participate or not participate. Guidelines on religious accommodation must be developed.
A questionnaire was provided to SEAC for input. Ann is very interested in feedback from SEAC on Equity and Inclusion. Please complete and return to Ann.
At the conference Linda and Carol attended there were comments regarding the need for recognizing the distinctiveness of Catholic School Boards.

2. District School Board Ontario North East Ann Sutton

Three letters from other school boards were received by Ann from other SEACs. The focus of these letters was on the growth in the number of students with special needs. SCCDSB has a direct voice at MACSE and the Minister of Education through Linda Ward.

3. Universal Supports Planning Guide Renée Zarebski
Copies of the Universal Supports Planning Guide were distributed for review. This document was developed by Thames Valley School Support Program in consultation with school boards. A copy has been provided to each school, along with a disc to print up additional materials to individualize for students. The universal supports are required to provide a basic foundation of support for student with ASD and benefit all students.

4. Demonstration Classroom Update Renée Zarebski
The demonstration site selected for this year is at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School. The focus is on a student using the universal supports in his daily program. The process to access the demonstration classroom was outlined and the expectation for visiting schools was reviewed.

5. Bullying Resources

Lisa Thompson-Power

A presentation was provided to the board on bullying. A definition has been provided by the Ministry for bullying. Bullying is an on-going issue. It can be physical, verbal, cyber-bullying etc. The Student Support Services team provides support to schools with bullying issues. Objective is to build capacity of school team to assist with bullying issues. There are a number of existing programs in place with regard to training and teaching about bullying.

There are resources available for schools to access for bullying. Resources have been purchased for schools and are kept current and updated. Moving away from using the term victim – instead target. Language is moving towards using relational aggression instead of bullying.

6. Behaviour Presentation Update

Lisa Thompson-Power

On January 27th, the team will be working with Curriculum on a half day presentation for itinerant music and physical education teachers. Objective is to provide strategies for itinerant teachers to implement into their role immediately. Itinerant teacher's role can be very challenging.

Agenda for the morning was shared. Focus on setting limits, de-escalation strategies and classroom management techniques.

February 1st PD day will focus on the Learning for All document.

G. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

1. Update

Carol Bryden and Linda Ward

One board meeting was held this month. Lisa provided a presentation at that meeting and there was a presentation and demonstration on Premier Suite. Future meeting will be focusing on Budget. Linda and Carol attended a meeting on the weekend. One session focused on social networking and student access to these sites.

H. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Lianne brought information forward about sending letters out in our internal mailing system. Request was denied when this was asked. Presentations are provided to Grade 5 classes around Epilepsy. Lianne was advised of the process to access the board's internal courier system.

I. NEXT MEETING DATE – Monday, February 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the CEC in the St. Louis Conference Room. Please contact Cathy Calvert at 1-866-336-6139 ext. 237 if you are unable to attend this meeting.

J. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

K. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Kathy Arcuri-Arnott and seconded by Annie Sheehan to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

CARRIED