

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre, Wallaceburg – Ursuline Conference Room

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Autism Society Ontario	TBA
Community Living, Chatham-Kent	TBA
Community Living, Wallaceburg	Dr. Veronica Vaughan
Down Syndrome Association of Lambton County	Michele LaLonge-Davey
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effect Group	Martha Fracalanza
Lambton Developmental Services	Adrian Vermeiren
Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent	Fabrizia Romano
Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County	Annie Sheehan
VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children	Kathy Arcuri-Arnott
Trustee	Marie Cadotte
Trustee	Mike Neuts
Principals' Association	Maureen Cecile
Vice-Principals' Association	Americo Todino
Board Advisors	Martin Forster Dr. Frank Leddy Brenda Roby Lisa Thompson Renée Zarebski

Regrets: Maureen Cecile, Mike Neuts, Brenda Roby, Annie Sheehan

Guests: Lisa Demers (Itinerant Behaviour Teacher), Mandy Guennette (Program Resource Teacher, St. Benedict Catholic School), Mary Ann McCrae (Itinerant Behaviour Teacher), Carrie McLaughlin (Educational Assistant, St. Benedict Catholic School)

Mike Neuts
SEAC Chairperson

Dr. Frank Leddy
Board Advisor

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The meeting was called to order and led in prayer by Vice Chair Kathy Arcuri-Arnott.
2. Adoption of Agenda with the following amendment:

Addition to agenda – Section C: October Board Statistics
Change to agenda – Section D: Presentations were moved to the beginning of the meeting, prior to Association Reports
Addition to agenda – Section F: Letter from Community Living Sarnia

MOTION BY: Michele LaLonge-Davey and seconded by Dr. Veronica Vaughan to adopt the agenda as amended.
CARRIED

3. Review of Minutes from September 18, 2006

MOTION BY: Michele LaLonge-Davey and seconded by Martha Fracalanza to accept the minutes from the September 18, 2006 SEAC meeting.
CARRIED

B. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

1. Community Living Wallaceburg V. Vaughan

Community Living Wallaceburg hosted their gala recently. Veronica has some travel tickets for a raffle and they are \$50.00 each. Please contact Veronica for a ticket.

2. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome M. Fracalanza

Adoptive parents are often not provided with information about children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and this creates a great challenge for families. There is a lack of understanding about children with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

1. Membership F. Leddy

Dr. Leddy reminded SEAC members that they will require letters from their association if they wish to be re-nominated to sit on SEAC. SEAC will be reforming in January 2007. This information needs to be sent to Dr. Leddy by November.

2. Letters of gratitude M. LaLonge-Davey

Please review the letter prepared and distributed by Michele. This letter relates to expressing appreciation to McGill Transportation for their exemplary services. Please provide any changes to Michele. This letter will be sent on behalf of SEAC. Once the letter has been revised it will be sent out with a copy given to Jane Buono.

MOTION BY: Marie Cadotte and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott to send a letter of appreciation to McGill Transportation.

CARRIED

3. Special Education Transformation – Working Table Report (enclosure) F. Leddy

This document is a statement of philosophy. Dr. Leddy provided a copy of a memo regarding the Special Education Transformation Initiatives. There is a statement that an IPRC is not required when regular classroom placement is recommended. Parents still have the right to request an IPRC. The focus is on the IEP as an accountability tool. The ministry is requesting a sample of IEPs from school boards. An internal audit will be conducted by the board to collect samples of IEPs from each school. The packages must be submitted to the Ministry by November 7, 2006. The Ministry is seeking input from school boards on funding related to the provision of special education programs. SEAC members need to review recommendations in the Working Table Report and provide feedback at the next meeting. Provide information on gaps evident for our board specific to the recommendations. Please send comments to Niki Ritchie for inclusion in next meeting.

4. Assistive Technology Symposium F. Leddy

Team members who attended the conference were identified. The attendees will meet in November to share information. Annie Sheehan attended on behalf of SEAC. A report will be provided to SEAC from the attendees.

5. October Board Report Statistics M. Forster

Martin shared information from the October report with SEAC.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation: Behaviour Intervention L. Demers, M. McCrae, L. Thompson

When a school has exhausted all of their resources the strategic intervention team is called in to provide additional support. A strategic intervention plan is developed and implemented. If the student still requires support, a referral to an itinerant behaviour teacher is made. The process to access the itinerant behaviour was described. The role of the itinerant behaviour teacher was outlined by Lisa Demers and Mary Ann McCrae. Information is gathered from the OSR, observations in class and outside, community partners and direct contact with the student. Strategies are developed which often include visual schedules, incentive programs, de-escalation strategies and modeling, the intervention lasts approximately three weeks. A school success plan is presented to the school team containing the strategies recommended to support the student. The roles of the various team members were outlined. Professional development is provided to the staff around the student's needs and the itinerant teacher checks progress periodically.

2. Presentation: Changing Role of the Educational Assistant M. Forster

Martin provided an overview of the history of inclusion of students with special needs in the mainstream and how support was provided. A number of years ago, educational assistants were seen as an extra pair of hands (i.e. parent helper, teacher aid). With Bill 82, educational assistants are supporting students with very high needs. They need specific skills to work with the students they are supporting. We currently have 130 FTE educational assistants supporting 255 students. The principal in collaboration with the school team determines deployment of educational assistants in their school. The four major areas where students may require support are physical, behaviour, developmental and communication. Minimum requirement for hiring is a 2 year related college diploma.

Mandy Guennette and Carrie McLaughlin provided a school perspective. School teams involve the classroom teacher, educational assistant, the program resource teacher, parents and the student. The role of various team members was outlined. A sample IEP was shared with SEAC. Specialized systems are used to teach students. A sample of a picture exchange program was provided. Sample of visuals and visuals schedules were shared. Teaching student independence is always a goal for students.

3. Change in Meeting Date – November 27, 2006 F. Leddy

Date of the next SEAC meeting is the date of the municipal election. A proposal to change the November 13th meeting date to November 27, 2006 and to cancel the December meeting date was made.

MOTION BY: Kathy Arcuri-Arnett and seconded by Marie Cadotte to accept the changes in the SEAC meeting calendar.

CARRIED

E. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

None

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

Letter from Community Living Sarnia

Community Living Sarnia is looking for support in addressing the wage issues of their employees. They are attempting to lobby the provincial government to address the wage differences between different workers in the province.

G. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Michele made a suggestion that SEAC or the school board host an evening parent information session on the IEP process. This would provide information to parents and perhaps reduce confusion. This event could include a presentation including a number of aspects of special education. Staff and SEAC could attend to provide information. SEAC was asked to provide information on what this could look like as there is a need to carefully plan how to extend the invitation. Bring ideas to the next meeting for discussion. SEAC will be key in planning and providing this session.

Question regarding grade 8 to 9 transition. This is an on-going process. Provide any suggestions to Brenda Roby.

Question regarding the Ontario Psychological Association funding. This initiative is still being discussed internally.

Question if it is possible to have Marilyn Dolmage or Rick Cunningham speak to a group at the Board. Generally the board tries to provide speakers who will meet a specific need. The team will discuss presenters and determine needs.

H. NEXT MEETING DATE – Monday, November 27, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at the CEC in the St. Louis Conference Room.

Please contact Niki Ritchie at 1-866-336-6139 ext. 388 if you are unable to attend this meeting.

I. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Inclusive Culture Initiative (January 2007)
2. Nominations (November 2006)
3. Review of Special Education Plan (March 2007)
4. Feedback from the Recommendations of the transformations document (November 2006)
5. Report from the Technology Conference (January 2007)
6. Information night discussion/planning (January 2007)

J. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Marie Cadotte and seconded by Veronica Vaughan to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.
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CARRIED