Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, May 7, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Father Kenneth Burns csc Board Room, at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Racine.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. **Opening Prayer**

   Opening Prayers were led by Chair Racine.

2. **Roll Call**

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<th>Members</th>
<th>Affiliations</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Excused</th>
<th>Absent</th>
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<td>Anna Racine</td>
<td>The Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario</td>
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<td>Rob Lavorato</td>
<td>Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara)</td>
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<td>Connie Parry</td>
<td>Association for Bright Children</td>
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<td>Kerry Thomas</td>
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<td>Cyndi Gryp</td>
<td>Community Living-Grimsby, Lincoln &amp; West Lincoln</td>
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<td>Kim Rosati</td>
<td>VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children</td>
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<td>Colleen Sword</td>
<td>Autism Ontario – Niagara Region Chapter</td>
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<td>Jay Gemmell</td>
<td>John Howard Society of Niagara</td>
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<td>Katie Muirhead</td>
<td>Ontario Brain Injury Association</td>
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<td>Sarah Farrell</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities Association – Niagara</td>
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<td>Bill Helmeczi</td>
<td>Pathstone Mental Health</td>
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<td>Father Paul MacNeil</td>
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<td>Maurice Charbonneau</td>
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| Student Senate       |                                                             |         |         |        |
| Representative       |                                                             |         |         |        |
| Leah Zahorchak       |                                                             |         |         | ✓      |
The following staff were in attendance:

Yolanda Baldasaro, Superintendent of Education; Brandon Atamanyk, Vice-Principal, Secondary; Colleen Atkinson, Coordinator Special Education; Tina DiFrancesco, Recording Secretary

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Katie Muirhead
Seconded by Rob Lavorato

**THAT** the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of May 7, 2014.

CARRIED

4. **Disclosure of Interest**

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

5. **Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 2, 2014**

Moved by Katie Muirhead
Seconded by Colleen Sword

**THAT** the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 2, 2014 as presented.

CARRIED

B. **PRESENTATIONS**

1. **Early Learning Kindergarten Program (ELKP) – Kendall Cappellazzo**

Kendall Cappellazzo, Early Years/Primary Consultant presented information about the Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) Program. In September 2010 the Ministry of Education brought in the program to be implemented gradually with full implementation by September 2014. Information was presented regarding staff, classrooms, curriculum, community connection and integration of the FDK Team and Special Education at Niagara Catholic. Questions were asked and answered during the presentation.

C. **VISIONING**

1. **Goals and Vision for 2013/2014**

1.1 **Review and Approval of Completed Goals for Board Website**

The completed goals will be posted on the Board website.
D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF APRIL 2, 2014

1. Learner Advocacy

2. Parent Outreach

3. Program and Service Recommendations

4. Special Education Budget

5. Annual Review, Special Education Plan

6. Other Related Items

   6.1 Update on Niagara Catholic District School Board Protocol for Students Not Writing Exams

      Deferred to June meeting

7. Policy Review

   7.1 Review Policies

      The Criminal Background Check Policy and Use of Corporate Logo Policy were presented. The deadline to respond is May 8, 2014.

E. SEAC REPORT

1. Review and Approval of SEAC Insert for Catholic School Council Agenda

   A discussion was held regarding the content of the SEAC report for Catholic School Council meetings and using SEAC minutes to establish the report. A copy of the SEAC report will be sent to members electronically prior to being sent to Principals.

2. Review and Approval of SEAC Insert for School Newsletteres

   A suggestion was made to use the same SEAC report for both the Catholic School Council agenda and school newsletter.
F. AGENCY REPORTS

1. **VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children – Kim Rosati**

   *May is Better Hearing & Speech Month!*

   - May 3rd, 2014 marked our 20th Annual VOICE Conference. Theme was Building on the Past for the Future. Keynote Speaker was Dale Atkin who spoke on A Balanced Life: What is it? And is it Possible. There were many informative workshops throughout the day for parents and professionals as well as an all-day Teen Workshop.
   - A SEAC session was also part of the afternoon agenda. Lynn Ziraldo, Executive Director, Learning Disabilities of York Region presented on effective and successful SEAC practices. She also helped SEAC representatives who were present understand their role and responsibilities and gather a better understanding of SEAC meeting processes. Attached is one of the handouts, *Surviving SEAC: How to Win Friends and Influence People.*
   - To end the day we had a 50th Anniversary celebration of VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children. VOICE Alumni where on hand to share their stories. Also, a very special guest The Tragically Hip’s Paul Langlous performed for us.

**Upcoming events**

- May 30th – June 1st 2014 Great Wolf Lodge Family weekend.
- July 13th – 5th VOICE Family Picnic
- August 8th-10th VOICE Family Camp weekend
- For more information on Great Wolf Lodge and Family Picnic, or to connect with other VOICE families, please email hhnpvoicechapter@yahoo.com
- For VOICE Camp and any other VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children inquiries visit www.voicefordeafkids.com

2. **Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara) – Rob Lavorato**

   - Upcoming Event - DSCP Trivia Night
   - DSCP AGM will be held next Friday, May 16th.

3. **Community Living – Welland/Pelham – Kerry Thomas**

   - Nil Report

4. **Association for Bright Children – Connie Parry**

   - Provincial hosting of the Educator/Parent conference was cancelled, however hoping to re-book in the fall.

5. **Community Living – Grimsby, Lincoln and West Lincoln – Cyndi Gryp**

   - Community Living’s Annual General Meeting will be held in June.
   - June 7th – *Walk for Inclusion* is being held at Charles Daley Park.
6. **Autism Ontario – Colleen Sword**

- The Annual General Meeting was held on April 29th with keynote speaker, Dr. Jo-Ann Reitzel from Hamilton Health Sciences.
- The Family Funding Bursary program has approved 40 families who will receive funding to assist with costs incurred in sending their child or youth family member with ASD to a summer camp program.
- Angling for Autism was held at the Niagara Fish and Game, for which Autism Ontario was able to raise funds to support families living with ASD.
- Evan's Ride will be held at J.W. Sheldrick Transport @ 2942 Thompson Avenue, Smithville. Registration begins at 9am. Ride begins at 10:15a.m. 11km & 22 km routes are available.
- Friday, May 30th is the Annual Golf Tournament @ Rolling Meadows Golf Club @ 12741 Montrose Road, Niagara Falls. Tickets are $140 per golfer or $560 per foursome. Registration begins at 11:00a.m. & Shotgun Start at 1:00p.m.
- Cycle for Autism is being held on Saturday June 21st, at Merritt Island, Welland. 2km, 5km & 10km courses are available.
- Gas for a year tickets are available through the Autism Ontario Chapter Office.

7. **The Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario – Anna Racine**

- Nil Report

8. **John Howard Society of Niagara – Jay Gemmell**

- Information was provided regarding the John Howard Society’s involvement relating to background checks in Ontario.
- The JHS Annual General Meeting will be held in June.

9. **Ontario Brain Injury Association – Katie Muirhead**

- Bill 21, the Employment Standards Amendments Act (Leaves to Help Families), 2014, passed with all party support in the Ontario legislature. The legislation will allow caregivers to focus their attention on providing care to their loved ones without the fear of losing their job.
- PAAC on SEAC is requesting that all SEAC members complete a survey to gather information on the effectiveness of SEACs across the province. In 2009, PAAC on SEAC conducted a survey of SEAC members. This revised version of the survey is being distributed for comparative purposes and to identify if there are any common themes/feedback which can be communicated in their report to the Ministry of Education. Members are encouraged to complete the survey by June 13th. Data will be presented once the report is completed.

10. **Learning Disabilities Association (Niagara) – Sarah Farrell**

- We will be running our full-day summer SLAM program during the months of July and August this summer. At SLAM, children ages 6-12 (with a potential reading difficulty) spend half the day on engaging literacy activities and the other half on recreational activities. Children also spend one-on-one time with a facilitator on their individual literacy
needs. The details for the program and application date have been posted on our website and the brochure has been attached to the minutes. We are currently accepting applications but spots are limited and have been filling up quickly!

- We will be running our 2nd Annual Trivia Night on Friday, June 6th from 6:30p.m. All proceeds will help support the programs and services offered to individuals with learning disabilities in our community. There will be pizza, prizes, cash bar, 50/50 draw. $90 for a team of 6-8 and $15 per person. Please call the LDANR office to register: 905-641-1021 (Mon – Fri, 9a.m. – noon).
- The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario offers a $1,000 scholarship award in memory of Roy V. Cooper, who volunteered for over 30 years as a board member of his local chapter in Ottawa, as a board member of LDAO and LDAC, and as a mentor to individuals with LD and/or their families in the areas of self-advocacy and assistive technology.
  a. This scholarship recognizes an Ontario high school student who has a documented Learning Disability and who will be attending a postsecondary institution during the 2014-2015 academic year. The student must be pursuing a bachelor of engineering or a bachelor of science in a physical sciences discipline (please note: physical sciences do not include social sciences or technology majors). Mr. Cooper spent his working life in the engineering/physical sciences field.
  b. Please email Sarah at programsLdan@cogeco.net if you have a nominee and Sarah will email you the Roy Cooper Memorial Scholarship Award Application Form.

11. **Pathstone Mental Health – Bill Helmeczi**

- The Pathstone Hope Award Event is being held on May 30th at Club Italia with special guest speaker/singer, Chantal Kreviazuk.

G. **STAFF REPORTS**

1. **Terry Antoniou – Principal, Elementary**

- Nil Report

2. **Brandon Atamanyk – Vice-Principal, Secondary**

   **Saint Paul**

- The Saint Paul Catholic Special Education class is reading their way to the top. Many students are spending a complete period a day working through their Reading Milestones program which focuses on developing and improving their literacy skills. The students complete a placement test to determine their reading ability levels. Once assessed the students begin completing and progressing through the levels where they are challenged with word walls, new vocabulary (spelling), worksheets, reading books, comprehension, sequencing questions, etc. Completed and evaluated work is also sent home to parents – this gives parents the opportunity to review learned skills at home with their children.

- Presently, our classroom is in the midst of renovation as we are building a new Reading Milestones work-center. The new area will have “Structured Teaching” centers where the students will have their own private and quiet work space. This space will be free from distraction allowing the students an opportunity to concentrate and work on their very
own individualized literacy program. We are excited to show-case this new work space within our Special Education classroom.

- In addition, our students travel to the local library where they have their very own library card and regularly search for and take out books to read during our DEAR (drop everything and read) time daily. Students are also rewarded with a certificate entitled them to “10 minutes of free time to read”. This is a prize they receive as they reach key MILESTONES in their literacy program. We look forward to the enhanced reading levels that our new Milestones work areas will provide and foster in our children.

**Saint Michael**

- IPRCs have taken place for current Saint Michael students, where necessary.
- Saint Michael staff continues to attend incoming grade 8 transition meetings and IPRCs. Our new Mustangs are excited about September and beginning the next phase of their lives.
- We have been working with our graduating students making sure that they are transitioned into their post-secondary destinations.
- Saint Michael is hosting a Health and Wellness Fair on April 8th to support our students. We are very thankful to the many outside service providers who will be coming to Saint Michael.
- Our Special Education Class is planning a few trips for the class. They are planning on touring some of Niagara Falls tourist attractions including the new Horn Blower river ride and plan on going to Heartland Forest for some time in the tree house and paths.

**Denis Morris**

- There has been a bustle of activity in the Special Education Department at Denis Morris and our students with special education needs have had the opportunity to shine in the classroom, in the community and in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- The Special Education Class look forward to attending their next community outing, the Drum Café, which will be held at Blessed Trinity Catholic High School on May 9th. Students will explore their musical talents while performing in an interactive drum session.
- Congratulations to all of our co-operative education students within the school and the community who will be completing successful placements in the cafeteria, main office and at Sobeys. Our students keep the school running smoothly and have received praise from our community partners.
- We are also transitioning many of our senior students into the community, the world of work and post-secondary programs. We have been meeting with community agencies, community partners and colleagues from Niagara College to ensure a successful transition for our students with special education needs.
- Next year, Denis Morris will be initiating a Best Buddies Chapter at our school. Best Buddies is an organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Special Education Department will be organizing a few events for our Best Buddies Chapter.

**Blessed Trinity**

- The DRUM CAFÉ is returning to Blessed Trinity during Catholic Education Week! The Special Education Class will be hosting Spirit Day on May 9th. We are looking forward to students and staff from our Niagara Catholic high schools joining us for an exciting day of
drumming and friendship. Our peer tutors are very involved in planning and participating in this interactive event.

- Students, staff and peers from the Special Education Class ventured to the Fallsview Waterpark for a day of water fun. This was a first experience for many of the kids and their enthusiasm was palpable. They returned to school very tired but very happy with great stories to share with their families.
- Transition visits are being implemented for not only the students who will have Special Class Placement, but for those who are anxious about transitioning to secondary school. Meeting the resource team and becoming familiar with routines ahead of time provides relief to both students and parents.
- Discussions continue with the elementary schools in regard to placement and support when students arrive at Blessed Trinity. Transition and IPRC meetings are an excellent opportunity to meet parents and discuss learning needs.
- Transfer of Information meetings are also taking place. Bringing Grade 8 classroom teachers together with the secondary Resource, Guidance and Success Team is a key piece in the transition process. We strive to set students up for success in Grade 9.
- Report cards were sent home on May 2nd. We in the Resource Department are very proud of our students’ achievements and will continue to monitor their progress and plan appropriate pathways.

3. **Yolanda Baldasaro – Superintendent of Education**

- May 15 - Graduation Ceremonies will be held at the Scotiabank Centre in Niagara Falls.
- May 15 - Partners in Catholic Education is being held at John Michaels Banquet Hall.
- April 4 – Participated in the MCYS webinar: Putting it All Together: A Strategy for Special Needs Services that Make Sense for Families.

4. **Colleen Atkinson – Coordinator Special Education**

- Understanding and Promoting Self-Regulation Event is being held on May 28th at Denis Morris, with keynote speaker, Patti McGillivray.
- May is Better Hearing and Speech Month.

**H. TRUSTEE REPORTS**

1. **Father Paul MacNeil – Trustee**

- OCSTA General meeting was held in Niagara Falls; Kathy Burtnik was elected president of OCSTA.
- Catholic Education Week: Serving in the Love of Christ - Look for various activities throughout the week at shopping malls and schools.
- *Catch the Spirit Award* was held at Lakeshore Catholic on Monday, May 5th.
- Distinguished Alumni presentation will take place on Friday, May 9th.

2. **Maurice Charbonneau – Trustee**

- Nil Report
I. STUDENT REPORT

1. Leah Zahorchak – Student Representative

   • Nil Report

J. NCPIC REPORT

   • There was a call out for nominations for parent representatives on the NCPIC.
   • The next NCPIC meeting will be held on May 8th

K. NEW BUSINESS

1. Learner Advocacy

2. Parent Outreach

3. Program and Service Recommendations

4. Special Education Budget

5. Annual Review, Special Education Plan

6. Other Related Items

   6.1 Achieving Excellence, A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario

       Superintendent Baldasaro handed out the booklet, Achieving Excellence, A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario to the SEAC members. This document gives a synopsis of the visioning of education in Ontario.

7. Policy Review

L. CORRESPONDENCE

The following letters were received and presented for information:

1. PAAC on SEAC - letter regarding assistance from SEAC members to complete a survey.
2. Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board - letter regarding mandatory special education preparatory courses for all teachers graduating from teacher education programs in Ontario.
3. Greater Essex County District School Board – concerns regarding current funding model for special education.
M. QUESTION PERIOD

N. NOTICES OF MOTION

O. AGENDA ITEMS – DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Budget Presentation – Superintendent Vetrone – June meeting
2. Possible CCAC Presentation
3. PAAC on SEAC Survey Results – Katie Muirhead

P. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Year End Dinner

   The Year End Dinner will be held prior to the June SEAC meeting, 6:00p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre.

2. St. Thomas More closing ceremonies will be held on May 8, 2014.

Q. NEXT MEETING:

   Wednesday, June 4, 2014 at 7:00p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre

R. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Katie Muirhead
Seconded by Kim Rosati

   THAT the May 7, 2014 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

   CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 8:30p.m.