MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2015

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 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>
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<th>Excused</th>
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<tr>
<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>Carol Baldinelli</td>
<td>VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children</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>Andrew Howcroft</td>
<td>Community Living Welland Pelham</td>
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<td>Pat Vernal</td>
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<td>Maurice Charbonneau</td>
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<td>Taylor Timoney</td>
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The following staff were in attendance:

Yolanda Baldasaro, Superintendent of Education; Colleen Atkinson, Special Education Coordinator; Jim Whittard, Principal – Secondary; Tina DiFrancesco, Recording Secretary
3. **Approval of the Agenda**

   Moved by Rob Lavorato  
   Seconded by Sarah Farrell  
   **THAT** the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of October 7, 2015.  
   
   **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 September 9, 2015**

   Moved by Trustee Vernal  
   Seconded by Sarah Farrell  
   **THAT** the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of September 9, 2015 as presented.  
   
   **CARRIED**

B. **PRESENTATIONS**

1. **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – Janet Rylett, Special Needs Facilitator**

   Janet Rylett, Special Needs Facilitator presented information on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Information was provided regarding signs of FASD, statistics and strategies used to support students with FASD. Questions were asked and answered during the presentation.

C. **VISIONING**

1. **Goals and Vision for 2014-2015**

   1.1 **Goals for 2014-2015 – SEAC Presentation at the New Teacher Induction Program**

      SEAC members provided suggestions to finalize the content of the PowerPoint presentation for the upcoming presentation at the New Teacher Induction program on October 28 at the Sheraton Four Points in Thorold.

   1.2 **Goals for the 2015-2016 School Year**

      Chair Racine suggested that ideas for goals for the 2015-2016 school year be brought forward to the November meeting.
D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2015

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

7. Policy Review

E. SEAC REPORT

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

2. Review and Approval of SEAC Insert for School Newsletters
   • Nil Report

F. AGENCY REPORTS

1. VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children – Carol Baldinelli
   • Nil Report

2. Down Syndrome Caring Parents (Niagara) – Rob Lavorato
   • September 19 – Participated in the Pied Piper Parade.
   • October 30 – Halloween Dance
   • 1st week of November is Down Syndrome Awareness Week.
   • November 14 – Trivia Night
3. **The Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario – Anna Racine**

- Tourette Syndrome Association meetings are starting up again to try and build this support group.

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

- October is LD Awareness Month! To raise more awareness on learning disabilities and to reduce the stigma, we have sent each elementary school with one LD Awareness poster and each secondary school with two LD Awareness posters to display in a public space. As this is our blackout month, we are unable to fundraise; however, Freedom 55 has helped out and are raising funds for us through various initiatives and they have raised $1,506 so far and still have 2 weeks left. We are very grateful for their efforts and support!
- Our Fall programs have kicked off this week. We are running Reading Rocks, Reading Rocks Jr. and BEST now until December 3, 2015. All of the programs filled up quickly. We will be planning for our Winter programs very soon.
- Within the past few years, we have been responsible for the local ADHD support group in Niagara called HOPE (Helping Others Parent Effectively). HOPE is a parent support group ran by parents for caregivers of children with ADHD to provide them with them with resources and tools. We are pleased to announce that we received funding through the Ministry of Education’s PRO (parents reaching out) grant to support this year’s work within HOPE. This means more resources for the HOPE group and the parents involved, such as babysitters onsite for the meetings, refreshments, handouts, resources to send home with caregivers, etc. We are looking forward to carry out all of these great initiatives this year.

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

- Nil Report

6. **Community Living Welland Pelham – Andrew Howcroft**

- The article “*Quality Education: It’s not a Choice!*” by Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint will be included in the November agenda package.
- The Community Living Annual Dinner Dance will be held on November 21 at the Croatian Hall.

**G. STAFF REPORTS**

1. **Lisa Selman – Principal, Elementary**

- Nil Report
2. **Jim Whittard – Principal, Secondary**

*Blessed Trinity*

- Educational Resource Teachers and Special Education Teachers throughout Niagara Catholic were thrilled to welcome our students back to school after a busy summer holiday.
- All schools will host a Grade 9 Curriculum Night during the month of September. The Special Education Department, in conjunction with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), has developed two Power Point presentations that will be shared with school communities on Curriculum Night. On this evening, at Blessed Trinity, we will also host an Open House for our Special Education Class where new and returning parents will have the opportunity to mingle and meet each other’s families.
- Blessed Trinity Special Education Staff will continue our work with Transitional Aged Youth and our partners within the community. We are looking forward to working together to support individuals and their families develop a plan for when it is time to leave the high school setting. This initiative will be reflected specifically for each and every student on their Individual Education Plan.
- SEA equipment (laptops and FM Systems) are currently being distributed to students.
- Individual Education Plans (IEP’s) are currently being developed. Parental input is always invited and appreciated. IEP’s will be mailed home no later than 30 days after the commencement of the school year. Teachers have been made aware of the students they will accommodate and there is ongoing discussion between them and the Resource Department to ensure student needs are met.
- Schedules for Educational Assistants and timetables for students have been developed as our students are integrated into a variety of classes and activities throughout the school. Classes include not only core subjects but also Culinary Arts, Construction, Drama, Art, Transportation and Co-Operative Education.
- We are excited to be participating in Music with Mendelt, a Music Therapy Program. Other upcoming events include swimming at the YMCA twice a month, Halloween Cooking Classes at the Superstore and a trip to Puddicomb Farms for some Halloween fun.
- The Peer Tutoring course is taught by our Special Education Teacher who does a wonderful job of educating students in regard to exceptionalities and inclusion. This rewarding program pairs peers with our students with special education needs as they go to classes and participate in events. The bonds are incredible and can be felt at the special events held throughout the year.
- It’s been a busy and exciting beginning!

*Saint Francis*

- Several students from our Special Education Classroom are attending the APC Horticulture program in the afternoon.
- Our Special Education Classroom students are baking muffins for our P3 program each week and help to prepare muffins and other breakfast items for our Breakfast program each day.
- One of our Special Education Classroom students is involved in a Co-op placement at Swiss Chalet.
- We are in the process of meeting with all grade nine students on an IEP in order to ensure a smooth transition to high school.
- We are in the process of completing draft copies of IEPs for all of our students.
- Our school swim club begins this week, and some of our Special Education Classroom students will be participating again this year.
Notre Dame College

- We are happy to have a new Special Education teacher who brings new ideas and a great deal of enthusiasm to her new role in the school.
- The Special Education Class went on a field trip to the Welland Public Library where students listened to a book being read and then had a chance to look through books of their choice. They finished their session at the library with a short movie and then walked back to Notre Dame. We have another library visit booked for September 26.
- October 5 – The Special Education class is going by bus to Heartland Forest where we will take part in a pumpkin program. The students will also have an opportunity to go on a trail walk, train ride and various other activities.
- September 18 - The Special Education class made lunch; pizza on an English muffin. Students were able to choose their own toppings. On September 25 we cooked again as it was hot dog day and our students were able to choose their condiments.
- October 6 is our bake sale to raise money for our room and trips. Students will pair up with Social Climate and make treats to sell in the cafeteria during both lunches.
- We have students doing a co-op at the Dollar Tree, The Restore Store, The Blue Star and Pet Value.

Holy Cross

- The Special Education Class at Holy Cross has been learning about the power of positive language. We have been posting words that inspire us around our room and using beads to create necklaces with positive messages. We have also been researching the meanings of our names and reflecting on the traits that make us unique in the eyes of God.
- Holy Cross is looking forward to the Halloween masquerade party at Denis Morris where we will meet our new pen pals from Blessed Trinity. We plan to share transportation with Saint Francis and forge new friendships throughout the day.

Saint Paul

- A new year begins in the Special Education class at Saint Paul Catholic High School bringing some new staff and new students. We bid adieu to four graduating students. We wish them the best of luck in all future endeavors! The new year will provide our students many new opportunities and experiences in academic and social settings. Some upcoming events include a Halloween Party at Denis Morris and Christmas/Hockey event here at Saint Paul High school. We have a senior student participating in the co-op program who has just started a placement at Sobeys. The Special Education Department is looking forward to a great year!

3. Yolanda Baldasaro – Superintendent of Education

- The Niagara Catholic System Priorities 2014-2015 Achievement Report was presented for information.
- October 8 - Annual Director’s Inspiration Award at Our Lady of Scapular Church in Niagara Falls.
4. *Colleen Atkinson – Coordinator Special Education*
   
   - Schools are in the midst of completing Individual Education Plans for students.

H. TRUSTEE REPORTS

1. *Pat Vernal – Trustee*
   
   - October 7 – Trustees attended a meeting in Hamilton. Special Education funding was a big topic of discussion amongst all Trustees.

2. *Maurice Charbonneau – Trustee*
   
   - Nil Report

I. STUDENT REPORT

1. *Taylor Timoney – Student Senate Representative*
   
   - Student Senate had their first meeting and will be having another meeting on Tuesday, October 13.
   - Student Senate participated in the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival Parade held on Saturday, September 26.

J. NCPIC REPORT

   - The NCPIC hosted the first Family Games Night at Holy Cross Catholic Secondary school on September 29. The next Family Games Night will be held at Lakeshore Catholic High School on October 14 and Saint Francis Catholic Secondary school on October 15.

K. NEW BUSINESS

1. *Learner Advocacy*

3. *Parent Outreach*

3. *Program and Service Recommendations*

4. *Special Education Budget*

5. *Annual Review, Special Education Plan*
6. **Other Related Items**

7. **Policy Review**

The Attendance Support Program Policy (201.16) and the new Asthma Policy were presented for information and review. Chair Racine and Superintendent Baldasaro suggested that any comments be brought back to the November meeting. The deadline to respond is November 15, 2015.

**L. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Superintendent Baldasaro informed the SEAC members that the letter received from St. John Ambulance Saint-Jean, Chair A Van Division regarding the appointment of a new representative to serve on the Niagara Catholic Special Education Advisory Committee was reviewed. According to the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education regarding eligibility, the proposed representative did not meet eligibility requirements to sit as a member of the Niagara Catholic SEAC.

2. New correspondence was received and will be reviewed at the November meeting.

**M. QUESTION PERIOD**

1. A question was asked about the school board’s relationship to Special Olympics. More information to follow at the next meeting.

**N. NOTICES OF MOTION**

**O. AGENDA ITEMS – DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

1. Special Needs Strategy
2. Highlight students/schools in the system
3. Faith Formation – Board Chaplaincy Leader

**P. INFORMATION ITEMS**

1. The Annual SEAC Christmas Dinner was mentioned and further information is forthcoming.

**Q. NEXT MEETING:**

*Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 7:00p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre*
R. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Vernal
Seconded by Rob Lavorato

THAT the October 7, 2015 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 9:10p.m.