



**DURHAM CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
*Learning and Living in Faith*

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

May 07, 2024, from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Catholic Education Centre, 650 Rossland Road West, Oshawa

*North and South Board Rooms*

### **Members Present:**

*Valerie Adamo, Chair, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired (In-Person)*

*Walter Heeney, Vice Chair, Durham Down Syndrome Association (In-Person)*

*Julie Sorhaitz, Learning Disabilities Ontario (In-Person)*

*Claudia Nosseir, Grandview Kids (In-Person)*

*Alex Massis, Community Representative (Virtual)*

*Shona Casola, Autism Ontario – Durham Region (Virtual)*

*Donna Callaghan, Alternate, Durham Down Syndrome Association (In-Person)*

### **Trustees Present:**

*Robert De Souza (In-Person)*

*Jim McCafferty, Trustee (Virtual)*

### **Staff Present:**

*Dr. Diane Lood, Senior Manager, Psychological & Speech Language Services/Lead Psychologist (In-Person)*

*Teresa Ezquerra, Student Services Coordinator (In-Person)*

*Paula Sorhaitz, Superintendent of Education (In-Person)*

### **SEAC Representatives:**

*Patricia Bosley, CUPE Representative (Virtual)*

*Kyla Edgecombe, APSSP Representative (Virtual)*

### **Presenters:**

*Mike Goff, Principal, Monsignor Philip Coffey Catholic School*

*Jenn Brown, Vice-Principal, St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic School*

### **Regrets:**

*Candace Julien, Community Representative*

*Lo Davis, OECTA Representative (Regrets)*

*CPCO Representative*

## **Minutes**

### **1. Opening**

#### **1.1. Call to Order**



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Vice Chair Heeney called the meeting to order at 7:31pm, offered the opening prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1.2. Memorials and Prayers**

**1.3. Land Acknowledgements**

**1.4. Roll Call and Apologies**

**1.5. Approval of the Agenda**

Motion: SS-2024-05-07-01

Approval of the Agenda

Motion moved by Julie Sorhaitz and seconded by Claudia Nosseir

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, May 7, 2024, meeting, as presented.” (CARRIED)

**1.6. Approval of the Minutes of April 9, 2024, SEAC Meeting**

Motion: SS-2024-05-07-02

Approval of Minutes

Motion moved by Walter Heeney and seconded by Julie Sorhaitz

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Tuesday, April 9, 2024, meeting, as presented.” (CARRIED)

**1.7. Declarations of Interest**

None

**2. Items for Information/Decision**

**2.1. Announcements**

**2.1.1. School Board budgets**

Paula Sorhaitz shared that Marie Hammond is reviewing the budget and will be reporting to SEAC for the June meeting (budget overview and special education budget specific).

**2.1.2. Welcome Back – Dr. Diane Lood**

Paula Sorhaitz welcomed back and introduced Dr. Diane Lood to the Committee. Dr. Diane Lood is the Senior Manager, Psychological & Speech Language Services/Lead Psychologist.

**2.2. Presentations**

**2.2.1. Summer Rays (Jenn Brown/Mike Goff)**



## **DURHAM CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD** *Learning and Living in Faith*

Mike Goff and Jennifer Brown presented an overview of the Summer Rays (Summer Learning Program):

- Lots of interest in the program (60 teachers applied, 25 EAs applied, 60 tutors applied and 7 DECE applied). Meeting next week to confirm staffing.
- Program runs July 2-26, 2024
- 15 classrooms, 5 locations and 225 students
- Program staffing: 15 teachers, 10 ECEs, 5 EAs, 15 tutors, 1 Vice Principal, 1 Principal, 1 Sr. Admin. Assistant, 1 Superintendent
- Program Locations: St. Jude, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, St. Marguerite D'Youville, St. Elizabeth Seton
- Classrooms: 10 classrooms for Kindergarten Year 2 and Grade 1 students, 2 Getting Ready for Grade  $\frac{3}{4}$  English classrooms, 2 Getting Ready for  $\frac{3}{4}$  French Immersion classrooms, 1 Multilingual Learners Classroom for Grade 3 to Grade 5 students

Goals of the Program:

- To utilize high impact practices to support student development of Literacy and Numeracy skills.
- To engage students through meaningful learning
- To provide educational and interactive learning opportunities in the summer that some students might not get to experiences.
- Experiential learning opportunities

Program Preparations:

- Staff Training Workshop in June
- Academic Services supported with carousels involving Robotics, Math Games, and Science of Reading Strategies
- Team Time was given to allow for site and classroom teams to explore the resource bins and site equipment.

Community Partnerships:

- Fire, police, and paramedic station visits and public library visits.
- Health nurses set up tables each week. Topics include Children's Mental Health, Healthy Eating, Personal and Dental Hygiene, Physical Health and Exercise, and Bike and Helmet Safety

Jenn Brown spoke to What Learning Looks Like:

- Focused instruction
- Small Group Reading and Writing Instruction
- Math Games and Activities
- Coding and Robotics



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- Learning at the Zoo and farm, learning with a scientist in the classroom, learning through movement and dance, learning numbers through bowling.

Program Assessments and Screeners:

- Students were assessed using diagnostic assessment pre and post program.
- Language Screeners were used to target specific areas for growth.
- CBM assessment for Math
- Measured Mom Assessments for Language
- Class Act assessment for French Immersion students
- A Summary of Learning (SOL form) was distributed to parents at the end of the program and to each students' home school.

Mike Goff spoke to Program Successes:

- Students increased an overall knowledge of just under 4 total sounds, digraphs, blends, letter recognition, and/or word pattern recognition.
- 78% of students demonstrated improvements in the Continuum Based Mathematics assessments.
- Parent feedback:
  - 96% - felt that DCDSB summer learning program was beneficial to their child's academic progress
  - 83 % felt that the small educator/child ratios were best for their child's learning.
  - 72 % felt that small Educator/child ratios in each classroom was most beneficial to their child's well-being.
  - 100% - felt the program prepared their child for the return to school in September

Summer Learning Program Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU5UhP5GUCk>

**2.2.2. Review/Approval of 2023-24 Spec. Ed Plan (Teresa Ezquerra)**

Teresa Ezquerra reviewed the changes to the 2023-2024 Special Education Plan:

- Approved plan due to the Ministry by July 30, 2024
- IPRC statistics report pulled at the end of April. This number may change minimally before we submit to the Ministry.
- Special Education Staff numbers refers to permanent staff.
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is being revised; link within Special Education Plan will be updated once available.
- Comment made to include a total number of PD provided and then list examples.

Teresa Ezquerra asked the Committee to review the plan and provide any feedback prior to the June meeting.



### 2.3. Discussion Items

#### 2.3.1. Artificial Intelligence and Special Education – Questions for MACSE

Paula Sorhaitz spoke to the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) request for feedback:

- Request for information on artificial intelligence.
- Deadline: May 20, 2024

### 2.4. Business arising from the Minutes

#### 2.4.1. Participation House, SEAC Seat

Committee held a vote to have Participation House join SEAC as a Member should the Education Act Ontario Regulation 464/97 for Special Education Advisory Committees allow it. The vote was unanimous. Following a review of the Act, the goal is to have Participation House join starting next school year (September 2024).

### 2.5. Staff Reports

#### 2.5.1. Student Services Report – Teresa Ezquerra, Dr. Diane Lood, Paula Sorhaitz

Teresa Ezquerra presented the Coordinator's Report:

- On April 23, several members of Student Services attended the Welcome to Kindergarten night held at All Saints CSS. More than 700 families attended. Student Services staff were available to answer questions parent(s)/guardian(s) had about the services/supports available for their child/ren.
- On April 30, approximately 50 Program Support Teachers attended an Orbit Note training session hosted by Texthelp and DCDSB's AT Team.
- Yesterday was the deadline for PSTs to submit applications for the Power to Achieve Scholarship offered by LDADR. The selection committee will recommend a submission to the association within the next week. The winner will be shared at the June SEAC meeting.

#### **Assistive Technology (AT) Numbers for 2023-2024 School Year-**

- 282 devices assigned to date (will be over 300 by end of school year)
- New devices assigned:
- 13" MacBook (11), Chromebooks (202), iPad (AAC) (10), Laptop (2), Replacement devices (57), additional internal and external transfers, software and apps: Read &Write, OrbitNote, Proloquo2Go, LAMP

Dr. Diane Lood presented the Mental Health Report:

Catholic Education Week (CEW) and Mental Health (MH) Week: May 4 - May 10

- The Canadian Mental Health Association's theme this year is **A Call to be Kind** and highlights that we all can be compassionate and kind toward one another and aligns with CEWs theme of **We are Called to Love**.



## **DURHAM CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD** *Learning and Living in Faith*

- Administrators have been given announcements to share each day and educators have been given virtual field trips in PowerPoint form, examining a different strategy each day (i.e., Gratitude)
- On Tuesday May 7th we will be offering the Prepare, Prevent, Respond: Suicide Prevention, Life Promotion workshop to educators.
- On Wednesday May 8th, we will be offering the Prepare, Prevent, Respond: Suicide Prevention, Life Promotion virtual workshop to parents, families and caregivers.
- The Secondary Student MH Leadership Summit will be held on Thursday, May 9
- Students and Staff are asked to wear green on Friday, May 10 for MH awareness.
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training - ran April 30th and May 1st.
- Substance Use and Youth Workshop, Partnership with Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health - ran April 11th and May 2nd.
- Upcoming:
  - ASIST Tune Up will run May 16th.
  - Sharing Of Excellence- Creating a Mentally Healthy Classroom part 5 will run May 13th for educators.

Paula Sorhaitz presented the Superintendent's Report:

- Budget for summer supports for students with special education needs has been confirmed.
- Special Education team and executive are busy planning for summer and transitional programs.
- DCDSB will be supporting Therapeutic Recreation in Schools programs through the Abilities Centre, in collaboration with the DDSB.

Summer programming

Lit/Num Camps (*interest courses for Grades 6, 7, 8 students*) Offered through Continuing Education

- In-person: Coding and Robotics / Cooking / Fitness /Dance / Digital Literacy / Summer Arts (Musical and Visual Arts)
- Online: Literacy / Numeracy / French Immersion Enhancement
- Student may be registered in multiple camps over the summer (7 weeks)

Transitional programs will be offered again this year at various schools:

- these programs typically occur in mid-late August.
- are geared toward assisting students with special education needs with transition to secondary schools.
- Staff is *typically* comprised of combination of PST, EA and various support staff.

Summer Institute for Educators (August 22, 2024)

Tentative topics include:



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- Universal Design for Learning
- Science of Reading/Structured Literacy
- Mathematics – use of concrete tools and thinking classrooms.
- Assisting students with Executive Functioning Needs
- Classroom set-up for students with ASD
- AIM for mental health.
- Alternative and Augmentative Communication
- Oral language and pre-literacy skill development

Guest Speaker Whitney H. Rapp, Author of Universal Design for Learning in Action: 100 Ways to Teach All Learners

#### PST Learning

- May meeting to focus on a variety of topics, many to be covered through a carousel format: CYC skill building, elopement, gifted programming, transitional programming, S-L software, and OT supports.
- June will focus on preparing PSTs for next year – training on Board-approved screener in collaboration with Academic Services

Motion: SS-2024-05-07-03

Approval of the May 7, 2024, verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader, and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by Robert De Souza and seconded by Julie Sorhaitz

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the May 7, 2024, meeting.”  
(CARRIED)

#### **2.6. Association Reports**

Julie Sorhaitz, Learning Disabilities Ontario

- Entries have been received for the Power to Achieve scholarship. Winner will be shared at the June meeting. Monthly newsletter is ready to be shared. If interested in receiving, sign up for the distribution list.

Walter Heeney, Durham Down Syndrome Association

- Izzy Salangsang Sibling Post-Secondary Scholarship – This scholarship was created by DDSA in 2024 in honor of four-year-old Izzy Salangsang. This annual scholarship will be awarded to two selected candidates. Apply here: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeE0E6HA1X\\_JY\\_P3Z\\_Sc4AFo-SXpRRa1Z2w\\_uXTP4jc7pSRQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeE0E6HA1X_JY_P3Z_Sc4AFo-SXpRRa1Z2w_uXTP4jc7pSRQ/viewform)

Valerie Adamo, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired



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- Camp is scheduled to happen in September. Poster is being designed to share more information. May is Speech and Hearing Month – different groups celebrated throughout the month.

## **2.7. Correspondence**

### **2.7.1. SEAC of Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board**

Received and filed.

## **3. Other Business**

### **3.1. Board Communications**

### **3.2. Motion to Adjourn**

**3.2.1.** The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 7:30 p.m.

Motion: SS-2024-05-07-04

Motion to Adjourn

Motion moved by Walter Heeney and seconded by Claudia Nosseir

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of May 7, 2024, adjourn.”  
(CARRIED)

### **3.3. Closing Prayer**

Closing prayer was offered by Robert De Souza. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09pm.

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Valerie Adamo  
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

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Paula Sorhaitz  
Superintendent of Education, Resource

Recording Secretary: Paige Wiggans