



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

**Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Durham Catholic District School Board

October 8, 2021 at 7:30 PM

**Virtual Meeting**

**Present:**

V. Adamo (Chair, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired), K. Burke (Vice Chair, Learning Disabilities Ontario), J. McCafferty (Trustee), W. Heeney (Durham Down Syndrome Association), Alex Massis (Community Representative)

**Staff Present:**

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), S. Phoenix (Manager of Social Work and Child and Youth Counsellors/Chief Attendance Officer), F. Mosier (Student Services Coordinator), A. Roffey (Communications)

**SEAC Representatives:**

P. Sorhaitz (Principal/Vice Principal Representative), B. Larson (APSSP Representative), M. Cope (CUPE Representative), L. Jemmott (OECTA Representative)

1. Opening
  - 1.1. Land Acknowledgements
  - 1.2. Memorials and Prayer

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m and offered the opening prayer.

- 1.3. Roll Call and Apologies
- 1.4. Call to Order
- 1.5. Approval of the Agenda

Motion:

SS-2021-10-05-01

Approval of Agenda

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by K. Burke. "That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, October 5, 2021 meeting, as printed."

1.6. Approval of the Minutes of the September 14, 2021 SEAC Meeting

Motion:

SS-2021-10-05-02

Approval of the Minutes

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by Alex Massis. "That the special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the September 14, 2021 meeting as submitted"

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Announcements

None

2.2. Presentations

2.2.1. Voluntary Student Census - Margaret Brimpong

Margaret Brimpong, Senior Manager of Equity, Anti-Racism and Engagement, presented the Stand Up, Be Counted, Be Heard Student Census; a voluntary survey that offers students an opportunity to self-identify various aspects of their identity.

Ms. Brimpong shared that the Ministry of Education is supporting school boards to build capacity to collect, analyze, and use voluntary students and workforce demographics data to promote inclusive and equitable work cultures and learning environments, meet the responsibilities to protect and uphold human rights under the Ontario Human Rights Code, and meet their obligations under the Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism.

Students in Grades 6-12 will be asked to complete the voluntary student census from April 25-29, 2022. Ms. Brimpong informed that the Student Census will collect quality and confidential student demographic data that will enable evidence-based decision making, while helping to address barriers to student success.

Ms. Brimpong added that the goal of Student Census is to understand and support the diversity of students and families, eliminate barriers to student success, and enrich students' learning

by providing the right supports at the right time while making schools safer and more welcoming for all. The data obtained from the student census will allow the board to make evidence-informed decisions with respect to the identification and elimination of systemic barriers and establish organizational improvement goals for school communities.

2.3. Discussion Items

2.3.1. Future Presentations

Vice Chair Burke drew attention to the SEAC Annual Calendar and recommended that it be reviewed and planned as outlined in the PAAC on SEAC handbook. It was suggested the calendar be reviewed annually in June with input from the Committee and finalized when the SEAC meetings resume each September.

The calendar for the current year was discussed and members made suggestions as to what they would like to have included in the calendar.

2.4. Business arising from previous meeting

2.4.1. Approval of September 14, 2021 Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Motion:

SS-2021-10-05-03

Approval of September 14, 2021 Verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by K. Burke. "That the special Education Advisory Committee approve the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of September 14, 2021 meeting"

2.4.2. Outstanding Questions

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes gave a brief follow up on the questions that were presented at the September 14th meeting.

2.5. Staff Reports

2.5.1. Coordinator's Report - Christine Congrady

Francesca Mosier, on behalf of Christine Congrady reported that the Student Services Coordinators are currently visiting all schools across the system to review special education needs.

Secondary Quadmester 1 IEPs were sent home September 24, 2021 and the Elementary Term 1 IEPs will go home October 19, 2021.

The new PST Mentoring Program will resume October 12, 2021 (25 mentees and 8 mentors will be participating in year 2 of this mentoring series)

Upcoming October Sharing of Excellence Series will include:

- How to write an effective IEP and
- Supporting Students with Learning Disabilities in Grade 9 Math

#### Autism

•Online Sonderly courses through Geneva Centre will begin in November, and are being offered to all educators

•Friendship Lab, PEERS, Secret Agent Society are all running virtually, beginning this week

•Durham Catholic Autism Resource Team (DCART) has a second Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA), Michelle Adair. Michelle will be supporting other students with behavioural needs, including students who are being supported by the Behaviour Resource Team (BRT).

#### 2.5.2. Mental Health Leader's Report - Shelley Phoenix

On September 28th, 86 Intermediate teachers from DCDSB, DDSB and KPRDSB attended a joint (3 boards) teacher training session to provide them with guidance and direction in order for them to run the TAMI classroom program in their classrooms this year. This year, rather than bringing facilitators and speakers with lived experience into schools, the program will be running virtually. We have created, and will be providing teachers with video content for portions of the program and demonstration videos to help teachers run some of the activities. The speaker portion of the program will also be done virtually with a TAMI coalition member facilitating the session and bringing two pre-recorded speaker videos. We hope to resume in-person speaker sessions when it's possible to do so.

In September, we wrapped up our parent mental health workshop series with Charmaine Laine on Sept 23 (Supporting your Child's

Mental Health Through the Impact of Racism and Oppression) and Nicole Tuzi from Sick Kids Hospital on Sept 28 (From Zoom to Classroom- How to Support Your Child's Social-Emotional Development When Returning to School).

At today's Program Support Teacher's meeting, two of our Behaviour Support Specialists rolled out the self-regulation kits that they created and put-together over the summer. These kits were intentionally developed to support students who have difficulty with self-regulating their behaviour and emotions and each school received their own kit.

DCDSB has partnered with Victim Services of Durham, who has provided training to all Administrators and Gatekeepers on Anti-Human Trafficking. During the PA day on November 12, 2021, all staff will receive similar training. This is in response to PPM 166:Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols. This policy direction by the Ministry recognises the unique role that schools can play in the prevention and intervention in cases of sex trafficking, which is very prevalent in Ontario and in Durham region.

- Staff professional development opportunities in October:
- Many of our professional staff took part in training with School Mental Health Ontario last week on supporting students with eating disorders;
- two safeTALK sessions have been scheduled for EAs on the Oct 8 PD day;
- we are offering Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for school staff in a gatekeeper role on October 13 and 14

### 2.5.3. Superintendent's Report - Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes welcomed the following new staff to Student Services:

- Colleen McCabe - Resource Teacher – Behaviour
- Samantha Ouellette - Resource Teacher – Vision Services
- Toneya Thavaweerasinghe - Itinerant Teacher – Hearing Services

- Diana Norville - Behaviour Support Specialist (BSS)
- Julie St. Onge - Behaviour Support Specialist (BSS)
- Jonathan Pompili - Social Worker
- Vanessa Blouin – Social Worker
- Michelle Adair – Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)
- Morlan Washington – Coach/Advocate for Black Students

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes thanked all the DCDSB staff that work in special education and ensure that our students feel welcome, supported and happy.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes highlighted that October is Learning Disabilities Awareness month and shared how it is being promoted internally across the board and externally to the parent and guardian community through a number of social media platforms.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared updates on Equity and Inclusive Education and provided highlights of the key focus areas under Equity; Anti-Black, Anti-Discrimination and Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes highlighted the purpose of the Special Education review and emphasized that the DCDSB wants to ensure that all members within the system work together to provide an inclusive school environment where students with special education needs can thrive and be inspired to reach their full potential, work to remove systemic barriers, and ensure transparent oversight and accountability for the delivery of programs and services to meet student needs as well as continuously strive for excellence through the use of evidence-based programs and approaches to support student learning and achievement.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared the key components and standards of service of the delivery model in Special Education.

Motion:

SS-2021-10-05-04

Approval of the October 5, 2021 verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by K. Burke and motion seconded by J. McCafferty.  
“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the October 5, 2021 meeting.”

2.6. Association Reports

Grandview Kids - Claudia Nossier

New Programs or Services:

Caregiver-mediated early years programs

With Grandview Kids as the lead, Lake Ridge Community Support Services and The Regional Municipality of Durham have begun delivering three caregiver-mediated early years programs as part of the Ontario Autism Program – OAP.

These programs help young children (12 to 48 months of age) learn new skills and meet individualized goals in their natural environments.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services are directly inviting families to participate via written letter. Grandview Kids is overseeing the referral and intake process. Families may only participate in one program at a time at no cost.

More information is available on the Grandview Kids website:

<https://grandviewkids.ca/caregiver-mediated-programs/>

2.7. Correspondence

2.7.1. Correspondence from Kenora Catholic District School Board dated May 4, 2021

The Special Education Advisory Committee agreed write their own letter to the Ministry of Education in support of Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

None

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion:

SS-2021-10-05-05

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The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by W. Heeney.

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of October 5, 2021 adjourn.”

3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, November 2, 2021 @ 7:30pm

3.3. Closing Prayer

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Valerie Adamo

Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

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Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto