



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

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting

Nov. 5, 2024, from 7:30 PM to 9:30 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)
Mariam Maskell, Participation House (Virtual)
Julie Sorhaitz, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region (In-Person)
Claudia Nosseir, Grandview Kids (In-Person)
Alex Massis, Community Representative (Virtual)
Candace Julien, Community Representative (Virtual)
Edward Secnik, Autism Ontario – Durham Region (In-Person)
Donna Callaghan, Alternate, Durham Down Syndrome Association (Virtual)

Trustees Present:

Robert De Souza, Trustee (Virtual)
Jim McCafferty, Trustee (Virtual)

Staff Present:

Diane Lood, Sr. Mgr., Psychological & Speech/Language/Lead Psychologist (In-Person)
Francesca Mosier, Student Services Coordinator (In Person)
Paula Sorhaitz, Superintendent of Education (In-Person)

SEAC Representatives Present:

Patricia Bosley, CUPE Representative (Virtual)
Jennifer Harvey CPCO Representative (Virtual)
Lo Davis, OECTA Representative (In-Person)
Ashley Toohey, APSSP Representative (Virtual)

Minutes

1. Opening

1.1. Call to Order

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m., 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-2024-11-05-01

Approval of the Agenda

Motion moved by Edward Secnik and seconded by Julie Sorhaitz.

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, November 5, 2024, meeting, as presented.” (CARRIED)

1.6. Approval of the Minutes of October 1, 2024, SEAC Meeting

Motion: SS-2024-11-05-02

Approval of Minutes

Motion moved by Walter Heeney and seconded by Jim McCafferty

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the Tuesday, October 1, 2024, meeting, as presented.” (CARRIED)

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Announcements

None

2.2. Presentations

Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) – Martin Smit

Mr. Smit provided an overview of the LD@school, a project funded by the Ministry of Education. [LD@school](#) is a bilingual web resource that provides educators with free supports for students with learning disabilities. LD@school features over 200 evidence-based and practice informed resources ready for classroom use. These resources include videos, webinars, podcasts and articles.

Mr. Smit demonstrated how to navigate the LDAO website and answered questions as they arose.

2.3. Discussion Items

2.3.1. Autism Ontario Nomination for Alternate Representative Position Letter

Chair Adamo received a letter dated October 22, 2024 from the Autism Ontario nominating Caroline Andrews as Alternate representative on the Durham Catholic District School Board Special Advisory Committee.

Motion: SS-2024-11-05-03

Approval of Alternate Representative for Autism Ontario

Motion moved by Walter Heeney and seconded by Julie Sorhaitz

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept Caroline Andrews as the alternate representative for Autism Ontario.” (CARRIED)

2.4. Business arising from the Minutes

2.4.1. Draft letter to Ministry – Learning Disabilities of Durham Region

Deferred to next meeting.

2.4.2. Recordings – Deferred from previous meeting

SEAC agreed to record the December 3, 2024 meeting and share amongst group. Discussion will continue at January SEAC.

2.5. Staff Reports

2.5.1. Student Services Report - Francesca Mosier, Diane Lood, Paula Sorhaitz

Francesca Mosier presented the Coordinator’s Report.

- OrbitNote and Read and Write Training were provided on October 29th to the new Program Support Teachers
- DCART members attended the Geneva Centre for Autism Symposium on October 30th, 31st and November 1st. The 6 DCART team members learned about new practices in Applied Behaviour Analysis, communication strategies, and social skills for students on the spectrum.

Diane Lood presented the Mental Health (MH) Report:

Emotional Validation Workshop

- SMHO has introduced a training for support staff in using an emotional validation approach in working with students that may be experiencing intense emotions.
- **Emotional validation** is the process of *listening nonjudgmentally to a student and believing their emotional experience* rather than trying to change it.
- This workshop was presented to the chaplains on October 11th.
- Psychology staff were trained in providing Culturally Responsive Assessments using the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (KABC2NU).
- In our commitment to providing culturally responsive services to students, families, and schools, the Psychological Services team participated in a full day webinar on specific assessment instruments that suit that purpose. The training provided useful information and recommendations for the team.



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- November 28th is DCDSB's Let's Talk Day with a focus on help-seeking
- Distribution of help-seeking materials, posters, announcements, lesson plans and a social media blitz.
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) ran October 9th and 10th
- Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Level 1 ran October 23rd and 24th

Upcoming:

- ASIST Tune Up- November 11th
- VTRA Level 2 with Kevin Cameron- November 13th and 14th
- Mental Health First Aid- December 9th and 10th

Paula Sorhaitz presented the Superintendent's Report:

The Superintendent provided a breakdown of the most recent Program Support Teacher Meeting held on October 22nd and highlighted the following:

- **Occupational Therapist Tiered Intervention Service Model**
 - an innovative, evidence-informed model to help OTs provide the right help, at the right time, in the right way, to any student.
 - a 3-tiered model with different levels of support/intervention to provide regular and consistent services that support individual students, classrooms, and the entire school community.
 - dynamic and fluid: Students can move between tiers.
 - well-aligned with the Universal Design for Learning framework.
- **OT Tier 1 Services are Universal Supports which:**
 - include classroom-wide strategies for grades JK- Grade 1 and some other classrooms where appropriate.
 - are provided in classrooms in collaboration with teachers.
 - are "good for all and necessary for some."
 - support teachers' comfort and capacity to address students' goals related to motor skills, self-care skills, self-regulation skills, and sensory needs.
 - may include recommendations for "tier one equipment."
 - covered by the universal consent letter sent out by the school

Motion: SS-2024-11-05-04

Approval of the November 5, 2024, verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader, and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by Edward Secnik and seconded by Robert De Souza

"THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the November 5, 2024, meeting."
(CARRIED)



2.6. Association Reports

Julie Sorhaitz, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region – Presents: **Keeping the Spirit of LD Awareness Month Going**

- Sunday, November 17th 2024 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Ajax Public Library
All are welcome – No registration or fee required

Part I - Presentation: Updates on the Right to Read

The recent announcement by the Canadian Pediatric Society regarding literacy and other.

LD issues. Join us as we discuss recent updates and developments in the areas of literacy and ADHD and how they impact you, your children and your community. We will also be discussing LDADR's current services and plans for the future.

Part II – IEP consultations with Donna and Julie

Bring your IEPs and your questions to discuss 1:1 with Donna Cook, longstanding Chair of LDADR and educator focusing on LD and ADHD, and Julie Sorhaitz, board member of LDADR and speech-language pathologist with a special focus in literacy and executive functions. This portion of the event will occur in the second hour. Questions? Please reach out to info@ldadr.on.ca

Claudia Nosseir, Grandview Kids

The new GrandviewKids Headquarters in Ajax will be officially open on November 14, 2024 for clinical services. The community open house will be on Saturday, November 23, 2024.

For more info, including how to prepare for your appointment and social stories: please visit, www.grandviewkids.ca/visiting-ajaxhq/

For more information on Grandview's tiered OT at school please see our fact sheet: https://grandviewkids.ca/wp-content/uploads/TieredServices_FactSheet_July2023.pdf

2.7. Correspondence

None

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

None

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on December 3, 2024.



Motion: SS-2024-11-05-05

Motion to Adjourn

Motion moved by Julie Sorhaitz and seconded by Edward Secnik.

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of November 5, 2024, adjourn.” (CARRIED)

3.3. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by Robert De Souza. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Valerie Adamo
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Paula Sorhaitz
Superintendent of Education, Resource

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto