

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 5, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Holy Family Catholic School
649 Murray Street
Wallaceburg, Ontario

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Community Living, Wallaceburg

Derek McGiven

Community Living, Chatham-Kent

Derek Jane

Epilepsy Support Centre

Sharon Berry Ross

Lambton County Developmental Services Group

Adrian Vermeiren

VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

Kathy Arcuri-Arnott

Trustees

John Van Heck
Linda Ward

Principals Representatives

Maureen Cecile
Juli Faubert

Board Advisors

Deb Crawford
Lisa Demers
Janet Boyle
Lisa Thompson-Power
Renée Zarebski

Regrets: Sharon Berry Ross, Adrian Vermeiren, Kathy Arcuri-Arnott, Maureen Cecile

Absent:

John VanHeck
SEAC Chairperson

Deb Crawford
Board Advisor

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome
2. Prayer
3. Additions to the Agenda - None
4. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION BY: Derek McGivern and seconded by Derek Jane to adopt the agenda.

CARRIED

5. Review of Minutes from February 6, 2012.

MOTION BY: Derek Jane and seconded by Derek McGivern to accept the minutes from the February 6, 2012 SEAC meeting.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

1. Holy Family Catholic School Team

Deb Crawford introduced Gloria Grieve, Principal of Holy Family Catholic School, Wallaceburg, who welcomed the SEAC members to the school and described the format of the evening presentations.

The SEAC members progressed through four different stations/ classrooms where they participated in demonstrations and hands-on activities. The four presentations were on the following topics: Word Q Software Program (Pam Blondia, Program Resource Teacher); Phonological Awareness Activities in the JK/SK Classroom (Angela Ellis, JK/SK ELP Classroom Teacher); Using the SmartBoard in the Classroom (Kristeen Ross-Bunda, Grade 6 Classroom Teacher); and Blended e-Learning (Renee VanDamme Marcus, Grade 2 Classroom Teacher). The presentations were very well received by all committee members.

C. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

1. Community Living, Wallaceburg
Nothing to report
D. McGivern
2. Community Living, Chatham-Kent
Nothing to report
D. Jane
3. Epilepsy Support Centre
Sharon not present
S. Berry Ross
4. Lambton County Developmental Services Group
Adrian not present
A. Vermeiren
5. VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
Kathy not present
K. Arcuri-Arnott

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

1. None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. None

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Special Education Report

L. Demers

Sections 7 through 9 of the Special Education Report were reviewed.

Section 7 of the Report focuses on Specialized Health Support Services in Special Settings. Specialized services are discussed in this section and the service providers are indicated. The provision of health support services is a shared responsibility among the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services. An example would be speech and language programs which require an educational environment are delivered and/or consulted with our own Speech and Language Pathologists. However the Ministry of Health is responsible for intensive speech therapy which is delivered through CCAC.

Section 8 discusses the Categories and Definitions of Exceptionalities. Regulation 181/98 which governs the IPRC Committee process contains a requirement for an IPRC to include the category and definition of any exceptionalities in its statement of decision when a pupil is identified as exceptional. The Ministry categories and definitions are outlined in our Parent Guide to Special Education pamphlet.

Section 9 discusses Special Education Placements provided by the Board. The SCCDSB has moved toward an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are integrated into the regular classroom setting with appropriate programming and supports in place. Two specialized placements are provided by the Board which provides additional programming experiences beyond the classroom.

The Options program provides an alternative learning experience for students who have an intellectual disability aged 18-21. The program is located at St. Clair College in Chatham and is the collaborative effort of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board, the Lambton Kent District School Board, St. Clair College, Community Living Wallaceburg and Community Living Chatham. The program, started in 2003 enrolls up to 15 students at one time. The program is designed as a bridge between school, the community and the workplace, helping students to acquire skills to live in the community.

The Autism Transition Classroom, located at St. Ursula Catholic School in Chatham is designed to provide highly specialized, intensive support to up to 6 students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The placements are usually 1-2 years in duration, preparing students to make a successful transition to his/her home school.

The Range of Services provided by the St. Clair Catholic District School Board is illustrated as a pyramid of services (See 9.2 – Page 43 of the Special Education Report).

2. Applied Behaviour Analysis Day

R. Zarebski

Lisa Demers, Renee Zarebski and Jill DeMaeyer (ABA Specialist) attended the ABA Day in Toronto on March 1st, coordinated by the Ministry of Education. All Boards were invited to send 3 staff members to this professional development opportunity. The day started with an overview of PPM140. Boards were given the opportunity to share effective practices. St. Clair shared our referral package and consent forms. The afternoon included group activities with focus questions. Overall, the day was a very valuable learning experience.

3. Preschool Transition

J. Boyle

The first of our Preschool Transition meetings were held at the Children's Treatment Centre on Wednesday, February 29th and Friday, March 2nd. Janet Boyle, Lisa Thompson-Power and Renee Zarebski met with 18 families and the community agencies with which these children are involved. These students entering JK or SK in our Chatham-Kent Schools have moderate to high needs and will most likely require some 1:1 support. On Wednesday, March 7th, we will be meeting at the Pathways Health Centre for Children, Sarnia with 10 families of children entering JK or SK in our schools in the Sarnia-Lambton area. Janet distributed a handout which illustrates the number of students coming in through the Preschool Transition process over the past 3 years. The data indicates that the number of students with moderate to high needs entering school in September 2012 in the Chatham-Kent area is more than double the number from September 2011. The number in the Sarnia-Lambton area has basically remained the same. In response to a question regarding the increase in numbers in the Chatham-Kent area, Lisa Demers indicated that this trend is similar with our co-terminus Board. The community agencies had previously made us aware of this group of children with needs. Follow-up school-based team meetings will be held at the individual schools in May and June.

4. Enhanced Transitions

R. Zarebski & L. Thompson-Power

Enhanced transition meetings for those students moving from Grade 8 to Grade 9 are currently being held across the System. There were 15 students with moderate to high needs, identified as requiring an early meeting to help ensure a smooth transition to the secondary level. Renee indicated that there were 3 meetings for students entering St. Christopher, 4 for students going to St. Patrick and 8 meetings for students transitioning to the Pines. At these enhanced meetings, the family meets with the school team to discuss the student's strengths, needs, anxieties, involvement of community agencies, special equipment, programming, etc. These meetings provide a wonderful opportunity to help alleviate anxieties and facilitate up front planning.

Transition meetings are also held for all students on an IEP, whether or not they are identified as exceptional. At these meetings, the student, parents and both the elementary and secondary school teams meet to begin the transition process. The elementary school team must complete a package of information which is signed off by the Principal and provided to the secondary school team. Packages are completed for students planning to attend the Lambton Kent District School Board as well. The Lambton Kent Board uses the same format.

5. Phonological Awareness Rescreen in April

J. Boyle

Phonological screenings will be taking place during the month of April in all of our elementary schools. The Speech and language Pathologists administered the screening to all SK students across the System last October. Grade 1 students, deemed to be "at risk" were assessed in late October by the Program Resource Teacher. Based upon the results of the October screening, the Program Resource Teachers will assist in the April cycle by administering the screening to those SK students identified as "not as risk". The Speech and Language Pathologists will screen those students recorded as "at risk" in the October screening. The school team, in consultation with the Speech and Language Pathologist will use the screening results to determine referrals for further assessment by the Speech and Language Pathologist.

G. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

Linda Ward reported that the Trustees were introduced to the new Board website at a recent meeting. As well, the Board calendar for the 2012-21013 school year has been approved. The recommendations of the Boundary Review Committee were accepted and approved by the Board of Trustees at the Regular Meeting of Tuesday, February 28, 2012. Effective September 2012, Monsignor Uyen Catholic School will become a single-track French Immersion school for JK to Grade 8. The Boundary Review Committee recommendations were approved. Linda Ward also reported that Paul Wubben had announced that he will be stepping down as Director of Education. The Board of Trustees will now begin the search for a new Director to replace Paul Wubben.

H. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Derek McGiven inquired about the possible ramifications to Special Education in light of the recent Drummond Report. Discussion indicated that the Liberal Government will have to have a good look at it. It was agreed that we will get a better indication of the implications after the Budget is brought down on March 27th. Lobby groups have already been active on this issue. It was stated that the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association has a good rapport with the Government. Linda Ward stated that she is not worried about further cut backs to Special Education. She indicated that it is a high priority with the Ministry. Linda stated that the Minister of Education is very aware of the needs. She further indicated that our Board has shown excellent results and has proven the effectiveness of our programs. Linda does not anticipate drastic changes to Special Education.

I. NEXT MEETING DATE – Monday, April 2, 2012

J. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

None

K. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Derek McGiven and seconded by Derek Jane to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

CARRIED