

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 19, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre, Wallaceburg – St. Louis Conference Room

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

Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County

Kim D'Hooghe

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:

Linda Ward, Derek McGivern, Renée Zarebski

Absent: Adrian Vermeiren

John VanHeck
SEAC Chairperson

Deb Crawford
Board Advisor

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome
2. Prayer
3. Adoption of Agenda

<p>MOTION BY: Sharon Berry Ross and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott to adopt the agenda.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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4. Review of Minutes from September 17, 20112

<p>MOTION BY: Derek Jane and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott to accept the minutes from the September 17, 2012 SEAC meeting.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
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B. PRESENTATIONS

1. **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)** P. Leblanc-Jaeger
Patricia Leblanc-Jaeger began her presentation by sharing the “BYOD Pilot Project Video” which is posted on the Board’s website. Currently the project is being rolled out in phases. The teaching staff in all 3 secondary schools is eligible to be involved in the program. As of November 16th, there were over 700 elementary students registered in the BYOD project.

The main reasons for BYOD include increased engagement and motivation for learners; promotes differentiated instruction that supports student achievement; promotes teacher and student collaboration; ensures students have the most current learning opportunities, relevant to today’s work environment; brings technology (hardware and software) that students are both familiar and comfortable with directly into the classroom; promotes a smaller environmental footprint (less printing of hard copies); and increases direct parent involvement.

Participation in the program is optional. Parents or legal guardians must provide written consent via a signed permission form. Student participation can be revoked by the teacher, parent or legal guardian at any time. The Student BYOD wireless network is broadcast between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at each school on weekdays only but not over holidays. Student access is controlled centrally. The Staff BYOD wireless network is completely separate from the Student BYOD network.

Tablets, iPods, iPads, Smartphones can easily connect to the BYOD networks, unless they are older technology. Netbooks, laptops and Macbooks can connect after a small script has been placed on them. The teacher is in charge of the use of the technology at all times. Student devices are for classroom use only. BYOD network does not facilitate printing. The Board’s Responsible Use Policy (in-draft) applies.

Discussion:

BYOD does not actually save the Board money, but rather there is a shifting of dollars. Additional costs are incurred because of the infrastructure required to support the project, i.e., purchase of additional bandwidth. For students who do not have devices, the teacher plans with the technology that is in the school. The Information Services Department will eventually look at the gaps; i.e., Where do we need more computers? BYOD will help to eliminate the stigma for students with SEA equipment as it takes technology to a more useable level for all students.

2. **Mental Health Presentations to Staff** L. Thompson-Power
 Mental Health is a growing concern in classrooms. The statistics indicate that 1 in 5 students suffer from some form of mental health. As a way to provide first-hand information to school staffs, presentations are being made at staff meetings, lunch and learns, etc. by members of the Student Support Services Team (Social Workers and Child and Youth Workers) in the school. Lisa shared the binder which has been provided to each member of the SSST, containing evidence-based information from the Centre of Excellence. There is a different topic for each month, e.g., October - Anxiety; November – Mood Disorders (Depression). Each topic (section) contains a PowerPoint presentation for the staff and a teacher hand-out. As well, every month there is a handout for parents which can be sent home with the school newsletter. There is also a CD of the material included in every binder. The feedback to date has been very positive. The program is being piloted this year.

C. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

1. Community Living, Wallaceburg D. McGivern
 No report
2. Community Living, Chatham-Kent D. Jane
 No report
3. Epilepsy Support Centre S. Berry Ross
 No report
 The Epilepsy Support Centre is bringing a youth group together.
4. Lambton County Developmental Services Group A. Vermeiren
 No report
5. VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children K. Arcuri-Arnott
 No report
6. Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County K. D’Hooghe
 No report

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

1. **Letter to Minister Broten** D. Crawford
 John VanHeck read the letter which had been drafted re: professional development in the area of special education for all new teachers. SEAC encourages that a Special Education preparatory course be mandatory for all beginning and graduate teachers. The letter will be forwarded to the office of the Minister of Education.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Coaching to Inclusion** L. Thompson-Power
 The 15th annual Coaching to Inclusion Conference was held in London on October 26, 2012. Lisa Thompson-Power is a member of the steering committee. There were two major highlights of this one day conference. Ashley Gialelem, a former student at the Pines and currently at St. Clair College opened the conference and was very well received. The keynote speaker, Dr. Jennifer Katz, a Professor at the University of Manitoba embraced Ashley’s message. Dr. Katz in her

excellent presentation entitled “Teaching to Diversity” outlined many practical strategies of inclusion for students with special needs. The other highlight of the conference was the recognition of Renée Zarebski as one of the Coaching to Inclusion award winners. Renée has since been recognized through the Board, local newspaper and radio. She graciously accepted this award. Renée is truly a “Champion of Inclusion”.

2. **SEAC Parent Evenings**

L. Demers

Lisa Demers extended a special thank you on behalf of Renée Zarebski to the committee who worked with Renée to plan the SEAC Parent Information evenings in October. Thanks was also extended to Sharon Berry Ross, Tim Charrette and Liz Edwardson who presented on the evenings’ theme of Mental Health. There were approximately 7 parents/families in attendance at the Sarnia-Lambton evening and 9 parents/families at the Chatham-Kent session. Although numbers were small, the parents/families who attended were very grateful and appreciative of the information presented and the opportunity to ask questions. On behalf of SEAC, John Van Heck extended thanks to Renée and her committee for their planning and organization of these two evenings.

3. **EA PD Days September and November**

J. Boyle

The September 24th Professional Development Day was hosted jointly by the St Clair Catholic District School Board and our co-terminus Board, the Lambton Kent District School Board. The venue was Ursuline College, Chatham with over 400 participants in total, and approximately 135 Educational Assistants from St. Clair Catholic. Meg Soper, a motivational speaker from Toronto delivered the keynote address with energy, enthusiasm and humour, entitled “Wit, Fit and Balance...Strategies for Success.” The presentation offered a different perspective on dealing with every day stresses, emphasizing the fact that humour and how we communicate can play an important role in helping us to lead more productive and healthier lives. Meg presented ways to strike more balance in our lives and to build resilience. She also discussed personality types and how to recognize the value that each employee brings to the workplace. The EA’s registered for one of 18 workshops during the afternoon session, ranging from topics on Anxiety in the Classroom to Autism Spectrum Disorder: Language and Social Communication to Suicide and Self-Injury. Workshop presenters were from our Board, LKDSB, CPRI and other outside agencies. An evaluation summary was distributed. Feedback was extremely positive on the entire day, with several of the EA’s noting it was one of the best Professional Development Days they have ever attended.

The theme of the November 23rd EA PD Day is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The presenter will be Monica Carruthers, one of the founding members of the Windsor-Essex Task Force on FASD. The venue for the day is the Brigden Agricultural Centre. Monica will be providing several very practical strategies which can be used with many children with special needs.

4. **Dr. Larry Swartz PD Day**

L. Demers

The Special Education and Curriculum Departments worked in collaboration to bring Dr. Larry Swartz from OISE to speak to the elementary teachers on the October 19th Professional Development Day. Dr. Swartz based his presentation on his book, “Creating Caring Classrooms”. Through the use of literature, Dr. Swartz gave practical examples of how to create caring classroom communities. The feedback for the presentation was very positive.

5. **BAC Presentation**

L. Demers

A presentation was made to the Board Advisory Council on the theme of Anxiety. This topic has been the focus of many presentations during the month of October including the SEAC Parent Information Evenings, presentations to school staff, members of NTIP, as well as Parent Council Chairs.

6. **Community Threat Assessment Protocol – Update** D. Crawford
There are currently 48 signatories on the Community Threat Assessment Protocol. To date, 350 personnel from both the SCCDSB and the LKDSB, as well as several community agencies have received Part 1 of the training from Kevin Cameron. The protocol allows us to share information freely and quickly when in a situation of risk of danger to individuals. The protocol is now in its final draft form. It is anticipated that the Directors of both school boards and community partner agencies will sign the protocol in the Spring 2013. Details of the protocol will then be rolled out to the press and the community.

7. **Learning For All** D. Crawford
A copy of the executive summary of “Leading for All”: A research report of the development, design, implementation and impact of Ontario’s “Essential for Some, Good for All” was distributed and reviewed. The report presents the background, structure and recommendations arising from a 21/2 year study initiative by Andy Hargreaves and Henry Braun of Ontario’s almost 10 year educational reform agenda that has attracted growing international attention and acclaim. The key implications of “Essential for Some, Good for All” are leading from the middle, beliefs also inspire and drive practice, responsiveness to diversity, collective responsibility, evidence-informed improvement, progress measured by growth, technology as integrated practice, flexible customization and special education is integrated and integral.

8. **EQAO Results for Students with Special Needs** D. Crawford
A report outlining the 2011-2012 EQAO Results for Students with Special Education Needs was distributed and highlights were shared. In St. Clair, there is a 97% participation level of students with special education needs in Primary and a 96% participation level of students with special education needs in Junior assessments. St. Clair’s achievement is above the provincial average in Primary reading, writing and math for students with special education needs. Primary reading results have increased, whereas Primary Mathematics results are an area of concern.

With regard to the Junior Division, St. Clair’s achievement is above the provincial average for students with special education needs in Writing and Mathematics and below the provincial average in reading. Mathematics is an area of concern in the Junior Division both provincially and locally. There has been a decline in Junior Reading results.

St. Clair Grade 9 EQAO results are above the provincial results for both Academic and Applied students with special education needs.

The Curriculum Department has been focusing on Mathematics. The Program Resource Teachers have also received additional training at the September Program Resource Teacher meeting. If the students remain in our System, we are able to track their EQAO scores from their Grade 3, Grade 6 and Grade 9 assessment years.

F. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. **Correspondence** D. Crawford
Deb Crawford stated that two letters had been received regarding Developmental Services Ontario (DSO). The decision was made to defer the discussion to the next meeting when Renée Zarebski is in attendance.
2. **Special Education Report** L. Demers
The Special Education Report must be available on the Board’s website.
- Section 1 – Consultation Process
In compiling the Special Education Report, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board followed directives from the Ministry of Education regarding the components that need to be within the report.

Section 2 – General Model for Special Education

This section includes Appendix 1: Parent Guide to Special Education which is a guide for parents which provides information regarding identification, placement and review procedures in the IPRC process.

Section 3 – Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of those involved in special education are outlined in this section.

G. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

John VanHeck reported that there was a Parent and Community meeting on October 16, 2012 regarding the consolidation of St. Patrick and St. Christopher Catholic High Schools. John indicated that all students will be relocated to the current St. Patrick's site in September 2013 for a full year during which time construction will be completed at the St. Christopher site. There were many questions regarding the transitioning of students with special needs. The new St. Patrick's Catholic High School will be open for students in September 2014.

H. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

No questions

I. NEXT MEETING DATE – January 21, 2013

J. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Information Item: Correspondence (DSO) – D. Crawford

K. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Kathy Arcuri-Arnott and seconded by Sharon Berry Ross to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

CARRIED