

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, January 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Catholic Education Centre, Wallaceburg – St. Louis Conference Room

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Community Living Wallaceburg	Derek McGivern
Community Living Chatham-Kent	Derek Jane
Lambton County Developmental Services	Carla Alway
Epilepsy Support Centre	Christine Canniff
VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children	Kathy Arcuri-Arnott
Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County	Kim D'Hooghe
Trustees	Carol Bryden Michelle Parks
Principals Representatives	Anita Cairns Juli Faubert
Board Advisors	Deb Crawford Brendan Deery Janet Boyle Jennifer Morrow Lisa Thompson-Power

Regrets: Carla Always, Christine Canniff

Absent:

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

- A. Welcome & Opening Prayer
- B. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION BY Derek Jane and seconded by Kathy Arcuri-Arnott to adopt the agenda.

CARRIED

- C. Review of Minutes from November 24, 2014

MOTION BY Carol Bryden and seconded by Kim D'Hooghe to accept the minutes from the November 24, 2014 SEAC meeting.

CARRIED

2. **PRESENTATIONS**

- A. Mental Health Lead Presentation

Christine Preece

- Christine shared that the goal of the strategy is to enact a systems change. There is not a specific program to do this; instead it will be a process. Rather than a deficit-based model, the focus will be on the positive – focusing on wellness rather than illness. Research demonstrates that when we continually focus on what is wrong, it becomes a revolving door; a cycle that is hard to break. The board will be moving to a strength based model (identify students' strengths, positive expectations; positive and meaningful experience). The goal will be to first work on changing language. A number of very powerful videos were shared that highlighted this message. The videos can be found at <http://letstalk.bell.ca/en/end-the-stigma/videos/> and www.thisvideo.ca.
- The approach will be to look at the whole child and their mental well-being and the link to whole health (sleep, nutrition, physical activity, healthy relationships and caring adults). Mental health is brain health. Research shows that children need hope and protective factors (caring relationships, connectedness...), as these are the essences of mental wellness. It is also important to recognize that in order to care for our children and youth, the adults need to take care of their own well-being.
- In order for the strategy to work, it needs to utilize best practices and be comprehensive. Shifting the culture of a school system take a minimum of 5-10 years in order for it to become sustainable. Some important first steps include conducting an environmental scan, having leadership support and a board wide commitment. Other aspects of Christine's role will include looking at the whole school/ whole child approach, increasing awareness, fostering relationships, providing environmental supports (where can students go that is a safe place/ have someone listen/ get sound advice); knowledge translation (staff, students and parents – e.g. language changes/ end stigma); capacity building; youth engagement; parent engagement; consistent practices and protocols; comprehensive approach; staff wellness.

- B. Anti-Bullying Week

Christine Preece

- This year the focus was on kindness and using this week as an awareness campaign. A toolkit was developed that contained a copy of the pledge (St. Patrick Secondary School has previously used this pledge to inform unity), as well as videos and 'public service announcements'. The goal was to have board wide unity by having all schools reciting the pledge at the same time; 26 of 28 schools participated in the activity.
- The goal for 2015-2016 will be to also incorporate wellness initiatives – with continued focus on wellness and positivity; another goal will be to increase parental involvement. A comprehensive plan will be developed for use in the future.
- It is noted that safe schools climate surveys will not need to be updated until the following year, at which time the questions will shift to focus on well-being (as there is a tendency to feel helpless when looking at deficit based information/ model).

- A revised plan will be submitted to the ministry later this month. The information will be shared with all stakeholders to ensure engagement from all parties (especially students and parents).

3. **ASSOCIATION REPORTS**

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|---|---------------------|
| A. Community Living Wallaceburg | Derek McGivern |
| • No report | |
| B. Community Living Chatham-Kent | Derek Jane |
| • No report | |
| C. Epilepsy Support Centre | Christine Canniff |
| • No report | |
| D. VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children | Kathy Arcuri-Arnott |
| • No report | |
| E. Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County | Kim D’Hooghe |
| • No report | |
| F. Lambton County Developmental Services | Carla Alway |
| • No report | |

4. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

A.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

A.

6. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| A. Self-Regulation presentation to PRTs | Lisa Thompson-Power |
|---|---------------------|
- Patti McGillivray, OT Reg. (Ont.) presented to the Program Resource Teachers, the Child and Youth Workers, the Social Workers and the Speech Language Pathologists on December 3, 2014.
 - Patti is and Occupational Therapist in both private practice at OT4Kids and with the District School Board of Niagara.
 - Patti has advanced training in neuro-developmental therapy and sensory integration therapy
 - Patti shared information on self-regulation – what it is, why it is important and why it is challenging for many of our students
 - Patti explained that the resulting behaviour of the disregulation is a reflection of the child’s neurological state...or the child’s ability or inability to process sensory information and to use it to make sense of the world
 - Working in the school system, Patti recognizes that therapeutic treatment strategies must be left to our community partners. However, she shared a number of strategies that can be implemented and utilized daily in our schools by our staff...(empower students, create safe, supportive relationships, structure the environment, incorporate visual schedules, ease transitions, reduce sensory overload, teach self-regulation, and promote self-regulation)
 - In teaching and promoting self-regulation, Patti discussed different programs that can be implemented with students on either an individual basis or with the class as a whole. (Zones of Regulation; Alert Program; Playtime with Zeebu). The board’s behaviour team

and CYWs have recently become familiar with and have started to use the Zones of Regulation with students, as have our community partners.

- The feedback provided was very positive. Patti helped make sense of what the group witnesses in the schools with regard to students and their 'behaviour'

B. November 21, 2014 EA PD day

Janet Boyle

- A joint (LKDSB and SCCDSB) EA PD day was held with approximately 425 EA's in attendance. The day was held at WDSS in Wallaceburg. A different format was utilized, which involved 4 workshops (participants were divided into 4 different groups and rotated through the sessions. The sessions were:
 1. Assistive Technology: A Personal Perspective by DJ Cunningham
 2. Anxiety in the Classroom by Lori Brush – Mental Health Lead for LKDSB;
 3. Communication and Complex Situations by Jen Cordeiro;
 4. Learning and Movement (Relaxation Techniques; Cooperative Games; Movement and Fitness) presented by 5 itinerant Physical Education Teachers from SCCDSB.
- The feedback was very positive for all sessions.
- The upcoming PD Day on January 30, 2015 will provide EA's time to work within their school developing materials for student programming. It is also being asked that an hour of the day is dedicated to learning the Read and Write Software.

C. Read and Write Software

Janet Boyle

- Last fall the use of Read and Write Software was piloted at participating schools and the feedback was positive. The program is accessible on Google and can be used on the Chrome books which are available at all schools. The program offers text-to-speech capabilities as well as word prediction and word definition with visuals, among other features. A one-year license has been purchased by the board for both school and home use. At the end of the year the program and its benefits will be re-evaluated. This is exciting news for our students as we know from experience that assistive technology is necessary for some, but good for all.

D. Provincial Parent Associations Advisory Committee (PAaC)

Deb Crawford

- A survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness of SEAC. Results of the survey can be accessed on the website www.paac-seac.ca; a handbook is also available. The letter received from Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee and was shared with SEAC members

E. kinderSTART

Deb Crawford

- kinderSTART sessions are will be taking place throughout the month of February and this year all elementary schools across Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton are involved. There will be community partners available at all sites on each of the scheduled dates.

F. Special Needs Strategy

Deb Crawford

- The ministry is moving communities along in the development of a service delivery model which is focusing on the provision of integrated rehabilitative services as well as coordinated service planning. Board representatives are participating in the Chatham-Kent and the Sarnia-Lambton SNS meetings. A link to gather information from the parent community has been set up on the board website. The survey is currently for the Sarnia-Lambton community; however, Chatham-Kent will be releasing a parent survey in the near future. The goal of the strategy is for a coordinated service plan across the community, providing rehabilitative services to children from birth to age 21.

7. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

1. The Inaugural Board Meeting was held on December 2, 2014. Carol Bryden was re-elected as chair and Michelle Parks was acclaimed to the position of vice-chair.
2. During a recent session with the ministry, training and presentations included a similar to the "Play 60" started by the NFL has been established to promote and incorporate physical

activity into schools. Although the program will not become part of the curriculum, resources will be provided through OPHEA.

3. Last year the Parents Reaching Out Grant funded presentations by Dr. Terry Nelson in both Chatham –Kent and Sarnia-Lambton. The next sessions will feature Sr. Angela Ann who will be speaking in both regions (St. Patrick Secondary School in Sarnia; Chatham, site hasn't been determined). Sr. Angela Ann will speak on the topic Technology and our children – how social media impacts our children and how it can work for us instead of against us. These sessions are scheduled to take place on April 8 & 9, 2015.

8. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

9. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** February 23, 2015 at 7:00pm.

10. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Kathy Arcuri-Arnott and seconded by Derek McGivern to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm.

CARRIED