



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

February 13, 2007

St. Mary-St. Cecilia Catholic School, Morrisburg

Present:

SEAC Members:

Sue Wilson (Chair), Trustee
Karen McAllister, Trustee
Fran Brauneisen, Association for Community
Living
Christina Edge, Autism Society of Ontario
Suzanne Whitney, Integration Action for
Inclusion of Leeds & Grenville

Board Resource Staff:

Dr. Donaleen Hawes, Superintendent of Education
Tom Jordan, Principal of Special Education
Paula Perrault, Special Education Co-ordinator
Rod McLeod, Special Education Consultant

Regrets:

Nancy Kirby, Trustee
Ann McGahey, Member-at-Large, OECTA
Rose-Marie Martin, Learning Disabilities
Association of Ontario

Guests:

Margaret Benke, Principal, St. Mary-St. Cecilia
Kim Little, BEST START Planner for Leeds and
Grenville
Jessica Deschamp-Baird, Data Analysis
Co-ordinator for the United Counties of Leeds and
Grenville
Dave Connors, Parent, St. Mary-St. Cecilia
Patty Madigan, Parent, St. Mary-St. Cecilia
Paul Mantha, Special Education Resource
Teacher, J. L. Jordan, Brockville

Meeting Called to Order

Sue Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Sue introduced and welcomed Karen McAllister, Trustee, Stormont and Dundas Counties, to the group.

Sue also welcomed all Special Education Advisory Committee members and guests to St. Mary-St. Cecilia and thanked Margaret Benke, Principal, for hosting the meeting.

All members and guests introduced themselves.

I. Opening Prayer

Tom Jordan led the group in a Prayer to Mary.

II. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Suzanne Whitney

Seconded by: Karen McAllister

III. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: Karen McAllister

Seconded by: Suzanne Whitney

IV. BEST START Presentation

Kim Little, BEST START Planner for Leeds and Grenville, provided an overview of BEST START initiatives in Leeds and Grenville Counties.

BEST START supports families and their children from birth to Grade 1, through:

- a massive expansion of licensed child care
- more fee subsidies
- early learning and care hubs
- early identification and intervention

Kim stressed the importance of evidence gathered through research to BEST START initiatives and planning.

History

- May, 2005 – historic agreement signed with Federal Government
- September, 2005 – BEST START Network formed
- January, 2006 – community driven planning process Implementation Plan
- February, 2006 – Federal Agreements cancelled
- September, 2006 – over 200 new spaces created in Leeds and Grenville

Present

- implement 2006-2007 initiatives
- Early Learning Experience Subsidy
- Early Learning and Care Hubs – pilot sites
- Child Care training and promotion
- gather data and information for next phase of planning

Future

- shift from child care space creation to planning for Children's Services Integration
- 2007-2008 BEST START Community Plan is due June 30th, 2007

This plan will include:

- identification gaps and priorities
- ways to strengthen partnerships, streamline processes
- plans to maintain and strengthen hubs
- information around enhanced funding for the pre-school Speech and Language and the Infant Hearing Program
- systems integration
- community engagement

Kim identified that there is no new money to address the needs, but there are opportunities to address gaps through community partners working together and prioritizing the areas of greatest need.

Kim used a series of questions to generate discussion and solicit feedback from members and guests;

- What are the critical early learning and care services that families need to access in the early years (0-6)?
- What factors, if any, restrict or prevent you, or others you know, from using community programs and services for young children?
- When you need information about your child(ren) or updates on parenting programs or children's services, where do you usually get it?
- What does children's services integration look like from a parent perspective?
- How will integrated service delivery make a difference to your family?
- What types of family supports would you like to see grouped together in one location?
- If we as a community could do only one thing to better support children and families, what would it be?

Kim addressed several questions from the group dealing with special needs children and child care needs.

Kim invited any parents who might be interested in serving on Community Advisory Groups to contact her. She can be reached at Kimberly Little, BEST START Planner, Children's Services Community and Social Services, 25 Central Avenue West, Suite 200, Brockville, Ontario, K6V 4N6, Tel: 613-342-3840, or kim.little@uclg.on.ca

V. Association Updates

Christina Edge, Autism Society of Ontario

Nothing to report at this time.

Fran Brauneisen, Association for Community Living

Nothing to report at this time.

Suzanne Whitney, Integration Action for Inclusion of Leeds and Grenville

Suzanne and her daughter, will be attending the Alberta Association of Community Living's Inclusive Education Conference on March 16th and 17th, 2007, in Edmonton.

Community Living Ontario is sponsoring a two-day School Inclusion Workshop on April 14th and 15th, 2007, at the Glen House Resort, 1000 Islands Parkway, Gananoque, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To register, or for further information, you can contact Kimberly Gavan or Kim Buchinger, Community Living Ontario, 240 Duncan Mills Road, Suite 403, Toronto, Tel: (800)278-8025.

VI. Department Updates

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario hosted the Regional Special Education Committee meeting in Kemptville on January 18th, 2007. Representatives from all of the School Boards in Eastern Ontario were in attendance. These meetings provide Boards with the opportunity to share best practices, and to receive updates from the Ministry.

The department sent a team of three (Sue Giff, Dianne Gauthier and Tom Jordan), plus two Community Partners (Wayne Kyte, Laurencrest Youth Services, and Desiree Martin, RNJ Youth Services) to the Ministry of Education's Promoting Models for Positive Student Behaviour meeting on January 24th, 2007. As a result, the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and the Upper Canada District School Board, Laurencrest Youth Services, RNJ Youth Services and Dalhousie Youth Services are submitting a joint proposal to the Ministry of Education to expand our ABLE program in Cornwall into other parts of the Board. If successful, we would like to set up Alternative to Suspension programs in Leeds and Grenville, and in Lanark counties. In the future, we would like to find a partner in Prescott Russell and set up a program there as well.

We hosted our first Principal's Special Education Focus Group meeting at Holy Cross, in Kemptville, on January 25th, 2007. Principals from various regions of the Board came together to discuss challenges that all schools face to brainstorm solutions.

Tom Jordan attended the 1st Annual Section 23 Regional Forum on January 29th, 2007. There were over 200 people in attendance including educators and representatives from the mental health fields.

On February 1st, 2007, Tom Jordan attended a meeting sponsored by Pathways, in Kingston, on Supporting Asperger Students. Our mental health partners in Leeds and Grenville (Pathways, Child and Youth Wellness Centre and OPEN DOORS) will all be receiving some money to help provide support for Asperger transitioning to secondary school. The next step is for our partners to develop their plan (with our input).

Paula Perrault provided an update on the STOMP Initiative

(Council of Directors of Education Project)

- we have trained the first eight coaches
- coaches will be starting the end of this week in their families of schools
- all coaches were brought together last Friday for an assessment day
- coaches and schools are receiving the initiatives enthusiastically
- mid-term report to the Ministry is due this week
- part of the report will include the submission of actual data from a sample of Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario students

Dr. Hawes provided an update on the Early Assessment Proposal that the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario submitted

- our proposal was very successful, and we will receive \$160,000 for early assessment
- we are piloting our project in Grade 2 in the Spring, 2007
- we will then be rolling it out to the entire Board in 2007-2008

Paula Perrault presented an overview of the IEP Review Initiatives

Ministry Requirements

- this is part of the Ministry's Special Education Transformation recommendation
- every Board was required to submit 10 case studies (needed to be a combination of identified and non-identified students – five from elementary and five from secondary)
- "case study package" = last year's IEP, June 2006 report card, and September 2006 IEP for each student

Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario – Audit Requirements

- we extended the audit by asking all schools to submit a random sample of 10 case studies per school
- this internal review was used to establish strengths, needs and next steps
- the process has allowed us to clearly establish needs and next steps
- the department is in the process of producing an IEP supporting document that will be shared (presently in draft form)
- we also developed a rubric to help school teams to discuss what a good IEP should look like
- Paula provided an overview of the strengths and weaknesses that we found in our review

Next Steps:

Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario – Plan

- all principals were informed of the important findings from the case studies
- we have established Professional Learning Communities
- the first round of work in the Professional Learning Communities is completed (secondary schools)
- the second round will take place in February to March, 2007 (families of elementary schools)

Ministry Plan

- the Ministry of Education is hosting a meeting on February 27th, 2007, in the afternoon where Dr. Hawes and two parents (one elementary and one secondary) are invited to participate
- the department is recommending that two parents from the 10 case studies (that were previously submitted) be invited to attend this meeting along with Dr. Hawes
- a follow-up Ministry meeting with Board teams will be February 28th, 2007, a Board team will be attending the Ministry meeting
- input from the Special Education Advisory Committee was noted and will be used to help determine who will attend

VII. Correspondence Received

We have received the following:

- information from the Association for Bright Children of Ontario regarding a workshop in Toronto on April 13th and 14th, 2007, with Dr. Karen Rogers
- information about a School Violence Threat Management workshop which is being held on March 30th, 2007, in Toronto
- information about a Dialectical Behaviour Therapy workshop which is being held on May 14th, 2007, in Toronto

VIII. Topic for Future Meetings

- Gifted Website
- Anti-Bullying Guideline Draft Policy
- Transitions – Rose-Marie Martin
- Transitions to Adulthood (April)
- AT Symposium
- Psychological Testing

IX. Good News Sharing

Members and guests shared many positive items of interest.

X. Next S.E.A.C. Meeting – Wednesday, March 7th, 2007, at St. Thomas Aquinas CHS, 1211 South Russell Road, R.R. #2, Russell, Ontario, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

** Please note that childcare will be available for this meeting.

XI. Closing Prayer

Tom Jordan led the group in the “Board Prayer”.

XII. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Moved by: Christina Edge

Seconded by: Karen McAllister

The meeting was adjourned by Sue Wilson at 8:58 p.m.

We invite all parents and interested staff to attend SEAC meetings, and for SEAC members to bring guests to each meeting.

We are people of God Transforming the world!