



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 26th, 2009

Board Office, in Kemptonville

7:00 p.m.

Present:

SEAC Members:

Sue Wilson (Chair), Trustee
Karen McAllister, Trustee
Nancy Kirby, Trustee
Fran Brauneisen, Association for Community
Living
James Borer, VOICE

Board Resource Staff:

Dr. Donaleen Hawes, Superintendent of Education
Tom Jordan, Principal of Special Education

Regrets:

Christina Nichols, Association for Bright
Children of Ontario
Rose-Marie Martin, Learning Disabilities
Association of Ontario

Guests:

Ruby Mekker, SERT, St. Mary, Chesterville
Rhonda Peterson, CUPE

Meeting Called to Order

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

I. Welcome and Introductions

Sue Wilson welcomed all members of the group to this evening's meetings.

II. Opening Prayer

Tom Jordan led the group in an opening prayer.

III. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: James Borer

Seconded by: Fran Brauneisen

IV. Approval of Minutes – September 30th, 2009

Moved by: James Borer

Seconded by: Fran Brauneisen

V. Association Updates

James Borer, VOICE

Upcoming Meetings or Conferences:

VOICE will be holding a S.E.A.C. Representative Workshop with Dr. John Lentz. Dr. Lentz is the past-chair of the Toronto Catholic District School Board S.E.A.C. Dr. Lentz will review the S.E.A.C. legislation. There will also be an update on the mentorship program and a workshop on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (to be held the weekend of November 8th, 2009, at Horseshoe Valley Resort, north of Toronto). On the same weekend, the Annual General Meeting will be held with a full report on the advocacy at Queen's Park that took place on October 19th, 2009.

New Initiatives:

VOICE has been invited to be a part of the "Free the Children, WE day" delegation that will present to parliament on November 20th, 2009. This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the rights of children.

Other Information:

On October 19th, 2009, there were over 150 families and professionals from all across Ontario at Queen's Park to raise awareness about the challenges facing children who are hard of hearing, or deaf, within Ontario. The key issue is the lack of standards and accountability within health, education and social services. This group known as Project Kids, H.E.A.R. is working the government to establish legal standards of care and support so that all children who are hard of hearing, or deaf, will receive equitable support regardless of where they live or which school board they attend. They spoke with over 20 MPPs, the Minister of Health, Honourable Deb Matthews, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, the Minister of Education, Honourable Kathleen Wynne, the Speaker of the House, Honourable Steve Peters, and the Premier, Honourable Dalton McGuinty. Over 20 media outlets, both local and national, also covered this event. The day was a great success and we now have direct liaison with all Ministries, who are working to address our concerns. VOICE will do this by sighting exemplary models and also stakeholders such as school boards, which are choosing to not properly support these children.

VI. Department Update

Ontario Student Information System

- Supporting documents to help principals, special education resource teachers and secretaries to complete the Ontario Student Information System (OnSIS) report to the Ministry, have been distributed to all schools.

CAT 3 – 2009

- CAT 3 testing results are expected to be distributed to schools by mid-November and can be sent home with Term 1 report cards and are encouraged to be utilized during parent/teacher interviews.

Roots of Empathy

- We hosted a Roots of Empathy training session during the week of October 19th, 2009. We now have 34 instructors across the Board with approximately 40 programs running.

Learning for All K-12 draft document has been received

- We are to develop a consultation process, identify some best practices and share with the Ministry.
- It was suggested that we review this document as part of a future S.E.A.C. agenda.

Welcome and Welcome Back

- Our Speech and Language Department has welcomed the addition of Julie McDermid to our team. Julie will be working out of the Cornwall Board Office.
- Our Psychology Department would like to welcome Catherine Olmsted back from maternity leave.

Looking Ahead

- Wednesday, February 3rd, 2010, will be an elementary Special Education focused professional activity day. Plans are still being finalized but we have asked our Principals to be thinking about providing leads to our talented teachers who can give assistance to facilitate smaller group sessions around evidence of learning, student data, assistive technology, read/write/think strategies, IEPs and the connections between these.

Bill 157 (New Safe Schools Legislation)

We received a copy of Bill 157.

- We will be required by January, 2010, to revise some our policies and procedures.
- It was also suggested that this could be a topic for a future S.E.A.C. meeting.
- Last time we had a member of our Special Education Advisory Committee sit on our Safe Schools Committee, and it was suggested that we may want to consider this again.
- We have received \$10,000 to train staff around this.

Bill 149 Update

- This legislation involves the need for School Boards to develop partnership with external agencies who also serve our students.
- The Ministry has released a paper on Mental Health and Addictions.
- Taking Mental Health to School report was recently received by the Board. This report examines school based services, Mental Health services.
- There is no indication thus far that any dollars will be attached to support this initiative.

VII. Code Update

It was decided to table this report forward until the January 27th, 2010, meeting.

VIII. S.E.A.C. Goal Setting Activity

The group brainstormed the following ideas to investigate further:

- Review and discuss the document Learning for All (K-12). It was suggested that we take sections and “go deeper” at a future meeting.
- Investigate further, the role of our Mental Health partners in our schools.
- Plan and implement a spring S.E.A.C. Symposium. This could include a possible keynote speaker and parent breakout workshops.
- Recruiting new members. It was suggested that this could be one of the outcomes of the spring Symposium.
- Share useful information with parents from the various S.E.A.C. agencies.
- Improve the level of resource that S.E.A.C. can be for parents e.g. during the IPRC process for new parents, supports available through the School Board, also through the Board website.
- Include S.E.A.C. representation when the Board looks at our partnerships with external agencies and when reviewing the mental health consultation paper and changes to the Safe Schools legislation.
- Review and update the S.E.A.C. Orientation Binder.
- Ministry is wanting School Boards to look at how we assess alternative learning expectations (all Boards are struggling with this area).
 - assessment and performance tasks
 - suggested that this feedback from S.E.A.C. could be very helpful for us to receive feedback
- Invite Lynn Ziraldo (past chair of Minister’s Advisory Council on Special Education – MACSE) to speak to our local group at the November meeting.

IX. Dates and Topics for Future S.E.A.C. Meetings – 2009-2010

- Wednesday, November 25th, 2009 – guest will be Lynn Ziraldo
- Wednesday, January 27th, 2010 – planning the Symposium
 - K-12 Document
 - Code Update
- Wednesday, February 24th, 2010 – Associations/Partnership Updates
 - Information on Exceptionalities
 - Learning for All
 - Annual Report
- Wednesday, March 31st, 2010
 - Learning for All
 - Mental Health Update – review of partnerships and how we are working together
- Thursday, April 22nd, 2010 – S.E.A.C. Symposium
 - tentatively at St. Michael CHS, Kemptville
 - 5:30 p.m. for dinner and 6:30 p.m. for keynote speaker
- Wednesday, May 26th, 2010
 - Annual Report introduced
 - Summary of consultation and feedback to the Ministry
 - Learning for All
- Wednesday, June 9th, 2010
 - Annual Report finalized and recommendations brought forward

X. Chair's Update

Sue Wilson shared that Lynn Ziraldo is confirmed to be our guest at the next S.E.A.C. meeting on November 25th, 2009.

Sue provided an update on the upcoming Prescott Russell Coalition Against Drugs on October 28th – 29th, 2009, in Rockland. Registration is going well.

XI. Correspondence Received

Dr. Hawes received an email request from the Special Education Advisory Committee of the Lakehead District School Board looking for information that the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario has around confidentiality and the sharing of information. Dr. Hawes will provide the requested information to the Lakehead District School Board.

XII. Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 25th, 2009, at the Board Office, in Kemptville

- A light dinner will be provided starting at 5:45 p.m.
- Meeting with Lynn Ziraldo (former chair of the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education – MACSE) will begin at 6:30 p.m.

XIII. Good News Sharing

Members shared good news stories from across the CDSBEO.

XIV. Closing Prayer

Tom Jordan led the group in a closing prayer.

XV. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Sue Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Moved by: Fran Brauneisen

Seconded by: James Borer