



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 9, 2007

Mother Teresa Catholic School, Russell

Present:

SEAC Members:

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

Board Resource Staff:

Dr. Donaleen Hawes, Superintendent of Education
Brian Peters, Principal of Special Education
Dawn Fewer, Special Education Coordinator
Rod McLeod, Special Education Consultant

Regrets:

Nancy Kirby, Trustee
Rose-Marie Martin, Learning Disabilities
Association of Ontario

Guests:

Kerry Lamming, Principal, Mother Teresa
Melanie Bertinato, Special Education Resource
Teacher, Mother Teresa
Patricia Clement, Catholic School Council Chair,
Mother Teresa Catholic School
Cherie-Lynn Buchanan, Catholic School Council,
Mother Teresa Catholic School
Andy Buchanan, Parent, Mother Teresa
Patty Maddigan, Parent, St. Mary-St. Cecilia

Meeting Called to Order

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

Sue Wilson asked that we pray for Justin McKenna and for little Alexis Pringle's family from Brockville.

I. Opening Prayer

Brian Peters led us in a prayerful song, "Give Thanks".

II. Welcome and Introduction

Sue Wilson welcomed all members and guests to Mother Teresa Catholic School.

III. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Suzanne Whitney
Seconded by: Fran Brauneisen

IV. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: Suzanne Whitney
Seconded by: Ruby Mekker

V. Information Technology Presentation – James Proulx and Dawn Fewer

Softgrid Software Deployment

James shared the vision of how to streamline the deployment of software and improve accessibility for our students. In the future, we are looking at being able to allow all students to access software through the internet.

Smart Boards

Dawn Fewer shared a video clip demonstrating the use of a smart board. The purpose of the presentation was to familiarize the Special Education Advisory Committee members with this interactive piece of technology which is making its way into classrooms across our Board. Some of our SEA applications qualify for smart boards, and the Special Education Department has also placed 8 boards in the classrooms of some of the Differentiated Instruction Support Teachers as part of the CODE project.

VI. Special Education Department Updates

School Visitations – This has been the focus of the Special Education Department in September; meeting the principals, staff and discussing the needs of our students.

Autism Update –The staff has begun development of an implementation plan by identifying students with autism and their teacher in our Board. This list will help us identify teachers who may need training. It will also help us establish a committee to assist with developing the Board Plan. We are currently working with Pathways to set up training sessions, and meeting with the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario this week.

Asperger's – We have met with the Asperger Planning Committee from Lanark, Leeds and Grenville (refer to handouts). We will work as a partner with this group and keep them

informed of our Board Plan so that they are better able to support families within our schools.

Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) Training – Regional training sessions were conducted for all Grade 2 teachers and school teams. Teachers were very enthusiastic about

the project, especially the Visual Assessment Portfolio and the new resources they were provided. Teachers are currently gathering educational assessment data on their high-needs students and will be sharing this information with their Project Facilitator. Visual Assessment Portfolios will be completed for all high-needs students. Teachers will work with the Project Facilitators to develop intervention strategies based upon the data they have collected. In some cases, further professional assessment may be warranted.

Kara Casey and Catherine Olmsted are currently working with teachers from our pilot family of schools. They have been receiving excellent feedback from teachers regarding the efficiency of the Visual Assessment Portfolio and how it lends itself to clustering students for differentiated instruction.

Differentiated Instruction (DI) In-services – The Department, Principals and Differentiated Instruction teachers continue to support our schools across the system. During the month of October we are planning focused, small group sessions within each region. Beth Ecclestone, from Pearson Canada, will be leading an in-service on differentiated instruction at the next Central Principal Meeting.

Individual Education Plan (IEP) Template – We have had the opportunity to sit in on a training session on the IEP template. It has many strengths, particularly in its clarity and ease of use. At this point, it is not ready for a system-wide implementation, so we are looking at a small pilot to get some feedback. We'll review the strengths of the template as well as the IEP review for upcoming training sessions within our Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to ensure that key messages are communicated.

VII. Association Updates

Christina Edge, Autism Ontario

The Autism Ontario Annual Special Education Advisory Committee Training for Special Education Advisory Committee representatives is being held on October 19 and 20, 2007, in Toronto. Christina will be attending and will report at the November meeting.

Suzanne Whitney, Integration Action for Inclusion of Leeds & Grenville

Story Collection – Online Survey – CACL has developed an **online survey** to gather information on **inclusive education** (and should only taking about 7 minutes to complete!). In order to paint a truly national picture, it is important that we have strong representation from families in Ontario. With this in mind I encourage families with school aged children to follow the link below and to share your views. In order for the sample to be useful, it is

important that we have participation from many families by October 31, 2007! Similarly, if you know of any families in your community, please share this request with them!

The survey can be accessed at:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=PBiTxo3P0ApmO3aHwpXaVA_3d_3d

Story Collection – The report card will showcase brief stories/illustrations about the successes and challenges of inclusion. We are seeking a range of stories from a range of participants – personal stories, family stories, stories from teachers, community members, employers, etc. Stories may be submitted to Anna MacQuarrie (amacquarrie@cacl.ca) until October 31, 2007.

VIII. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – Ruby Mekker

FASEout-Ottawa, Youth Services Bureau and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Coalition will be hosting an evening for caregivers of individuals affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The workshop is entitled, “Caregivers and Parents Enhancing Educational Success for Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), presented by Mary Cunningham. This workshop is scheduled for November 22, 2007, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., at the Youth Services Bureau, 2675 Queensview Drive, Ottawa.

IX. Feedback on the SEAC Webcast Training Event

Brian Peters and Dawn Fewer reviewed some of the key messages presented at the SEAC Webcast Training event that was held on September 15, 2007. In sharing some of the highlights from the session, it was noted that there were many things that align with our current practices, as well as some suggested recommendations. All Special Education Advisory Committee members were encouraged to view the webcast if they hadn’t already, and invited to provide their comments and feedback.

X. Correspondence Received

- Asperger’s Parent Group Flyer
- Asperger’s Syndrome – 3-part Training Series
- Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston – Dr. Garth Smith

XI. Topics for Future Meetings

- Individual Education Plan (IEP) Review
- EQAO Results
- Bullying
- Conflict Resolution

XII. Good News Sharing

Members and guests shared “Good News” stories/events.

Mother Teresa Catholic School has received a very special gift of a wooden cross sculpture. This wooden sculpture was designed and created by a parent at our school, Laurie McCannell. The cross stands 6 feet in height, and is 5 feet across. It is made of many different kinds of wood, shaped into individual crosses which connect to each other. The symbolism is the many different gifts the children from the school bring to the community. Mrs. McCannell has linked the meaning of the sculpture to various parts of the scripture.

Mrs. McCannell is a very talented artist within our local community and the Mother Teresa Catholic School community is very blessed to have been given this amazing gift.

XIII. Upcoming S.E.A.C. Meeting

- Tuesday, November 13th, 2007, at St. Mark School, in Prescott.

XIV. Closing Prayer

Brian Peters led the group in the “Board Prayer”.

XV. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Moved by: Christina Edge

Seconded by: Fran Brauneisen