



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, August 26th, 2020

Microsoft Teams – 6:00 p.m.



Present:

SEAC Members:

Sue Wilson (Chair), Trustee
Amanda Banfield (Vice Chair), Lanark
County Support Services
Karen McAllister, Trustee
Karen Moore, Open Doors for Lanark
Children and Youth
Rob More, Rural FASD Support Network
Shelley More, Rural FASD Support Network
(Alternate)

Board Resource Staff:

Norma McDonald, Superintendent of School
Effectiveness
Heather Bovey, Coordinator of Special
Education
Michelle Neville, Mental Health Lead

Approved Regrets with notification:

Deena Shorkey, Cornwall Community Hospital
Heather Gerber, Principal of Special Education

Guests:

Rhonda Peterson, CUPE
Lorraine Boyer

Regrets without notification:

Fran Brauneisen, Association for Community
Living

Meeting Called to Order

Sue Wilson (Chair) called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed all members and guests.

Opening Prayer

Heather Bovey led the group in a prayer entitled, “*A Prayer of Praise*”.

I. Approval of Amended Agenda

The agenda was amended to add a thank you to staff from CDSBEO for their work throughout COVID-19. Karen Moore along with Trustee Wilson extended thanks to the Special Education Department staff for all their hard working during the school closures. Praise was

also given for all the tireless work that is being done to open schools and to ensure students return to a safe and engaging environment.

Moved by: Rob More

CARRIED

II. **Sharing July 6th, 2020 Minutes**

SEAC minutes were electronically approved on July 6th, 2020.

Motion:

To receive minutes as presented.

Moved by: Karen McAllister

CARRIED

III. **Association Updates**

Lanark County Support Services – Amanda Banfield

- Agency is working on a re-opening plan to ensure safety of all involved.
- Continuing with virtual services Monday through Friday.
- Amanda will provide a video link as to what has been done during COVID-19.

Rural FASD Support Network – Rob More

Upcoming Meetings or Conferences:

- September 19th, 2020 – Audrey McFarlane, Executive Director for CanFASD

New Initiatives:

- Youth Mentoring Program starting due to Bell Let's Talk funding.
- Facilitation capacity to be increased through training.
- Increase in virtual and recording capabilities infrastructure.
- After-school virtual programming club now being offered at no cost to youth in the Ottawa Valley.

Other Information:

- Beckwith Tech Camp, our social enterprise, hosted a highly successful programming event. <https://sites.google.com/view/hackathonintheottawavalley/home>
- Our next five speakers are all internationally recognized experts on FASD and Justice and are being offered at no cost to the public virtually.

Open Doors for Lanark Children and Youth – Karen Moore

- Open Doors has been focusing on getting the word out about mental health needs.
- The pandemic and uncertainty about returning to school are the key concerns in the community.
- Wellness Wednesday is being offered to families.
- The agency will continue to reach out virtually.

- Increase in referrals the last two weeks and expect this to continue.
- Moved to Phase 3 and are working in the office part-time.

IV. Department Update

Transition week for CDSBEO is going well with almost half of our schools participating. This funding was provided by the Ministry to help our special needs students and students with mental health needs to transition successfully back to school.

Administrators, support staff (educational assistants and student support workers) and Board staff have been supporting parents and students to re-engage with the school, learn new routines, meet friends and feel safe at school. We provided visual schedules to increase predictability and decrease anxiety. Several of the students were new to their schools so we were able to determine common interests to support the start of making friends. We have been practicing routines such as appropriate social distancing, washing hands, sharing items, and wearing masks. We have done this through use of visuals, modelling and videos combined with practicing in the school environment. For the new students, we have done school tours and introduced them to the main people in the school. Our goal was to have fun, increase comfort and increase the student's ability to understand and practice healthy practices within the school.

The Ministry also provided funding for the expanded Summer Learning Program. This program was for students from JK to Grade 8 and ran virtually for three weeks in the summer. CDSBEO had 700 students sign up for the program, 20 educational assistants were hired and paired with a teacher to support students for six hours of learning a day. This involved synchronous learning in whole groups, small groups, and opportunities for educational assistants to work one to one with students. Students with a variety of needs (hearing, vision, ASD and LD) took part.

A Special Education Consultant (Sam Vidoni) was hired to oversee the program and ensure staff were informed around IEPs. She was also a resource for supporting students, parents, educational assistants and teachers.

Some of the challenges included reliable internet access, kindergarten students distracted/hard to focus and lack of parental supervision. Overall, the program was very successful in meeting the emotional, social, and academic needs of students.

Teachers and support staff are ready to go for September because of the opportunity to learn so much during the three-week summer learning program.

V. Presentation: "Supporting Mental Health" during COVID-19

Mental health support has not changed since COVID-19 as far as what kids need to be healthy mentally. They still need to feel hope, have a sense of belonging and have a caring adult relationship. This can happen through a different venue and with safety measures in place.

CDSBEO's website has a mental health section that includes community partners and support for parents and students.

During COVID-19 CDSBEO staff:

- Connected with community partners over the summer to come up with a plan.
- Community partners offered virtual support and will continue to do both online and face to face support.
- Behaviour crisis consultants, student support workers, chaplains, our mental health and addiction councilors and teachers have been checking in on kids regularly.
- PD sessions for staff on anxiety and trauma have been offered and the suicide protocol was reviewed.
- Lessons were offered by our Mental Health Lead (Michelle Neville) to all students in the Summer Learning Program.
- "Kids have Stress Too" (offered by the Psychological Association of Canada) provided lessons to teachers free of charge.
- Continuing Education students (Grades 9-12) received a widget on their summer school screen on how to access mental health supports in the community.
- Through the Cornwall Hospital, CDSBEO hired a couple people to connect with families.
- Open Doors worked with parents as well as with children transitioning from Grade 6 to 7 and Grade 8 to 9.
- Our PD sessions on September 1-3, 2020 will include topics on trauma, informed schools and anxiety.
- Community partners are all considered essential workers and will be providing care throughout the year to support students.
- Mental health training to staff will be offered throughout year.

VI. Ontario Community Living Motion

Superintendent Norma McDonald received no new information. This item will be tabled again at the September SEAC meeting.

VII. Review of SEAC Goals/Priorities and Presentations for 2020-2021 School Year

- How Special Education Students are Supported Virtually – September 30th, 2020
- Trauma – October 28th, 2020
- Self-regulation – November 25th, 2020
- SLP Science of Reading – January 27th, 2021

VIII. New Business

- **Letters of Invitation to Associations for New SEAC Association Memberships**
 - SEAC is waiting to hear from someone at Autism Ontario.
 - SEAC is always looking for new members to come to the table.

IX. Correspondence Received

No correspondence received.

X. Motion to Excuse Regrets Received

Motion:

Motion to excuse Deena Shorkey, Cornwall Community Hospital and Heather Gerber, Principal of Special Education.

Moved by: Amanda Banfield

CARRIED

XI. Next SEAC Meeting

The next meeting of the CDSBEO Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, September 30th, 2020 starting at 6:00 p.m.

XII. Good News Sharing

Members and guests shared items of good news from across our eight counties.

XIII. Closing Prayer

Superintendent Norma MacDonald led the group in the CDSBEO Board Prayer.

XIV. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

Moved by: Rob More

CARRIED

CDSBEO SEAC Quorum Tracking

	Trustee / Chair	Trustee	Assoc. for Community Living	Rural FASD Support Network	Lanark County Support Services	Cornwall Community Hospital	Open Doors	Member-at-Large (vacant)	Total
August 26 th , 2020	P	P		P	P		P		5
September									
October									
November									
January									
February									
March									
April									
May									
June									

New 4-year term of office effective December 1st, 2018.

(4 members are required to be in attendance in order to reach Quorum)