



Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on April 14, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

Present:

Administration: Paula Mann, Superintendent of Education
Theresa Bitonti, Special Education Coordinator
Jennifer Palangio, Secondary – Curriculum Lead
Jody Weller, Superintendent of Education

Trustees: Barbara McCool
John Willemsen

Associations: Marie Derosier, LDAO, Member
Tracy Hanzlik, Nipissing First Nation

Regrets:

Mary Grise, Parent Representative, Member
Dan Lachance, Community Living, Member
Jeannie Boissonneault, NDSS, Member

1. PRAYER

Mrs. McCool led the committee in prayer.

2. ROLL CALL/TRUSTEE ATTENDANCE

Roll call was completed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Barbara McCool and seconded by John Willemsen THAT the agenda of Tuesday, April 14, 2020 be approved as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by John Willemsen and seconded by Barbara McCool THAT the minutes of March 10, 2020 be approved as presented.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) Continuity of Learning

Ms. Weller shared a Continuity of Learning update. Below is a brief summary:

- School closure remains for staff and students and will be re-evaluated.
- The province's state of emergency has been extended until May 12th, 2020.

- The Learn At Home strategy phase one is now complete. Phase two has begun ensuring students are learning via teacher-led instruction in a virtual environment.
- Depending on individual student needs, challenges are being brainstormed.
- In a collaborative effort, involving Public Health, NPSC established protocols for staff to access schools to obtain devices and learning materials. A roll out is in place to ensure students have access to essential devices. This includes students with special education allotted devices and special needs equipment (i.e. iPads, Chromebooks, laptops, tricycles, sensory materials, etc.).
- System program teams (curriculum, TELT, special education, mental health & addictions teams etc.) have worked to compile online resources to support both parents and teachers in areas of reading, writing, mathematics and other areas of the curriculum. Staff may access the NPSC staff portal for additional resources. Regular communication around available resources via social media has been occurring to assist families.
- The majority of NPSC teachers consistently using two platforms to communicate with families and provide on line learning: EDSBY & Google classroom. A minority may use D2L. Teachers and principals have established solid communication with those tools.
- Staff are at different points on the learning curve with regards to virtual learning. Central teams are readily available to support and meet their professional development needs.
- Continuity of learning for all students, including students with special education needs is occurring. Processes specific to special education (i.e. IPRC, IEP, Transition Planning etc.) are being reviewed within this virtual environment.
- Teams at all levels are wrapping around students and engaging with parents. Teams continue to prioritize health and mental well being, while balancing education.
- Ms. Weller requested input/suggestions from SEAC on the NPSC plans that support the continuity of learning for students with special education needs.

6. UPDATES

a) Carousel Sub Committee Update

- Carousel Sub Committee discussed the need to postpone the 20th Anniversary Carousel Evening celebration. SEAC agreed to keep the item on the monthly agenda. The tentative date of May 20, 2021 was discussed. Ms. Bitonti to request the use of SJSH and communicate with the keynote regarding the proposed date.

b) Parent Guide

- SEAC sees value in extrapolating key components of special education (i.e. IEP, IPRC processes) and providing supplemental information in a simple, parent -friendly format (i.e. facts sheets or pamphlet). Ms. Weller and Ms. Derosier to draft documents for SEAC's review.

c) Letter to Minister of Education

- Ms. Weller reviewed the draft letter to Honorable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education regarding the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE). SEAC unanimously recommends forwarding the letter to the board for review and approval to be sent to the Minister of Education, as well as, all Ontario school board SEACs.

7. CORRESPONDANCE

NIL

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

a) Board Report

i) Superintendent's Update

Ms. Weller shared an update on the following:

- Learn @ Home Plan shared.
- School Closure: Phase 2 – May 4th – Re-evaluation will occur based on public health advice.
- Special Education - Students will continue to learn while in-school classes are suspended. Given the range of circumstances of students and their families, the continuity of learning will require a range of delivery options that are unique, reasonable and practical.
- School Mental Health Team – RISE Update
- Community Events Cancellation Update
- GSNs have not yet been released.
- Directors Report was forwarded to SEAC via email.
- Ms. Weller encouraged SEAC to access the board website for current updates.

ii) Coordinator's Update:

Continuity of Therapy Services:

- OKP therapists have been calling all of their families to get updates on progress and current needs. They have been sending resources and updating home programs as able. OKP is also about to launch virtual services for OT, PT and SLP for those families who are capable of and wanting to do so. OKP therapists remain available to the schools for consultation and they are able to attend case conferences via telephone or Bluejeans.
- The NPSC Speech and Language department remains active with work-related tasks. The department has been able to communicate with families, initiate tele therapy with specific clients, share therapy materials on line, complete reports as applicable, consult with school level staff and participate in professional development opportunities.

iii) Secondary Curriculum Lead Update:

- Special Education Teachers and Educational Assistants continue to participate in staff meetings and professional development opportunities such as Edsby, Google and Screen Castify.
- Communication with families and students is occurring regularly.
- A needs assessment has been completed for secondary students and technology is being distributed where required.
- Virtual teaching is a learning curve for some staff and all are moving forward.

b) Association Reports

i) Nipissing First Nation – Tracey Hanzlik, Member

- Staff are working from home with limited resources. The date for return is April 20th, however that is under ongoing review.
- NFN continues to be in contact with parents and students during this time.

ii) LDAO – Marie Derosier, Member

- LDAO is operational on line. Ms. Derosier encouraged committee members to view the LDAO website for virtual resources and professional development opportunities for educators and families.
- The LDAO circular is forthcoming. Ms. Derosier to forward.

9. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS / OTHER

NIL

10. DATE OF NEXT SEAC MEETING

The next SEAC meeting will be on May 12, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Tracey Hanzlik and seconded by John Willemssen the meeting of April 14, 2020 adjourned at 7:19 p.m.