



Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on February 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

Present:

Administration: Theresa Bitonti, Special Education Coordinator
Jody Weller, Superintendent of Education

Trustees: John Willemsen
Barbara McCool

Associations: April Porter – Community Living, Alternate Member
Tracey Hanzlik – Nipissing First Nation, Member
Marie Derosier – LDAO, Member
Mary Grise – Parent Representative, Member

Regrets: Jeannie Boissonneault – NDSS, Member

1. PRAYER

Ms. Porter led the committee in prayer.

2. ROLL CALL/TRUSTEE ATTENDANCE

Roll call was completed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by John Willemsen and seconded by April Porter THAT the agenda of February 9, 2021 be approved as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by John Willemsen and seconded by April Porter THAT the minutes of January 12, 2021 be approved as presented.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Carousel Evening 2021

Ms. Derosier shared an update regarding the availability of keynote speaker Michael Jacques. Michael is a public speaker, author and well known advocate for people with special needs. At a young age, Michael was diagnosed with autism and an intellectual disability. He shares the experiences from his life to help others understand and accept. Michael is available to provide a virtual keynote on March 24, 2021 at 7 PM. Ms. Derosier shared an update from the February 2, 2021 Carousel Evening Subcommittee meeting

including information on the draft flyer, registration process, celebrating 20 years with a slide show, save the dates, distribution of invitations/workplaces and advertising. Ms. Weller confirmed that a 'save the date' has been placed on the Board website. Ms. Weller will also distribute the invitation list for SEAC to provide their suggestions/feedback. All materials will be shared electronically in the near future. Ms. Weller will send a meeting invite for the next Carousel Evening Subcommittee.

Board Meeting Documentation

In advance of the monthly Board Meeting, an electronic information package is shared with SEAC. Discussion was had in regards to whether or not SEAC wishes to receive the monthly package or the agenda only (with electronic hyperlinks to attachments). Ms. Weller will gather additional information and update SEAC during the March 2021 meeting.

6. UPDATES

a) Parent Guide

Deferred

7. CORRESPONDENCE

a) PAAC on SEAC Survey Results

Results were forwarded to SEAC electronically.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

a) Board Report

i) Superintendent's Update

PIC Virtual Speaker Session: February 25, 2021 with Dr. Greg Wells

Sponsored by our NPSC Parent Involvement Committee, our working group is pleased to confirm that Dr. Greg Wells will provide a virtual speaker session on February 25, 2021. Dr. Wells is a health and high performance expert who, as a scientist and physiologist, has dedicated his career to making the science of human limits understandable and actionable. Dr. Wells has a PhD in Physiology, served as an Associate Professor of Kinesiology at the University of Toronto, and is currently a senior scientist at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Early French Immersion Virtual Parent Information Session: February 2, 2021

In lieu of our annual in-person Early French Immersion Parent Information sessions hosted by our EFI Program North Bay and Callander schools, our team facilitated a live virtual session for parents via the Microsoft Teams platform on Tuesday February 2, 2021.

SJSH Virtual Grade 9 Parent Information Session: Week of February 8th, 2021

This week, St. Joseph - Scollard Hall is hosting interactive virtual Grade 9 Parent Sessions. The interactive sessions will provide an opportunity for parents and students to meet our SJSH staff, learn about our variety of programs such as Indigenous Education, Advanced Placement, STEM, Experiential Learning, Construction Technology and Hospitality/Tourism, among others. Ms. Weller shared a short SJSH promotional video that was prepared by students.

February 16, 2021 parents are able to attend a live Q & A with SJSH staff and administration.

Supporting School Mental Health During COVID 19

School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) has created Mental Health Action Kits, which include practical resources to support student mental health during COVID-19. These resources and learning opportunities have been prepared to both bolster student mental health and support the well-being of educators. The classroom-ready resources can be used for both virtual and in-person learning and are designed to help support students in promoting wellness during challenging times, supporting student mental health learning, and encouraging early help-seeking when mental health problems arise.

New Grade 9 Mathematics Course

As part of the ongoing commitment to addressing systemic discrimination and helping to break down barriers for Indigenous, Black, and racialized students, students from low-income households, and students with disabilities and other students with special education needs, the Ministry is developing a plan to remove Academic and Applied courses (de-streaming) in Grade 9 and issue revised curriculum policy with de-streamed courses that meet the needs of all students and support all future education pathway options.

ii) Coordinator's Update:

Fundamentals for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Student Success

In partnership with Provincial Demonstration Schools, NPSC offering an opportunity for applicable educators and paraprofessionals to participate in professional development around the fundamentals for Deaf and Hard of Hearing student success. This is a series of four, one hour, virtual educator training sessions (every Tuesday during the month of February 2021) for those supporting Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. It will be offered via Zoom and hosted by two Educational Resource Consultants from the Ministry of Education. Training session topics include: Supporting Oral Language, An Overview of Hearing Technology, The Listening Environment, Accommodations, Student Skills Development, Metacognitive Skills, Social Pressure and Social Skills, Listening Skills, & Self Esteem and Advocacy.

Educational Assistants PD Day- January 29, 2021

Two guest speakers presented virtually to system educational assistants on January 29, 2021:

Morning Session: Michael Jacques, Guest Speaker

Michael Jacques is a public speaker, activist and author. At a young age, Michael was diagnosed with autism and an intellectual disability. Never one to shy away from obstacles, Michael made his authorial debut in 2018 writing and self-publishing "**Can't Read, Can't Write, Here's My Book**" using speech-to-text technology, sharing experiences from his life to help audiences understand accepting and belonging. His story demonstrates the empowerment that comes from being comfortable in your own skin, knowing your strengths, valuing relationships, and giving back to your community. In 2020, Michael also released a children's book co-authored with Heather Gale entitled, "**I Belong: Can I Play?**". Michael with his father Marcel shared their journey, their challenges and their many successes. Educational Assistants appreciated

hearing their inspiring messages of friendship, accepting, belonging and how educators have the opportunity every day to educate our community on authentic inclusion and diversity.

Afternoon Session: Gentle Hatha Yoga Class and Yoga Nidra Relaxation with Krystal Henophy, Co-Owner and Instructor, Grounded Studios

- iii) Secondary Curriculum Lead Update:
NIL Report

b) Association Reports

- i) Nipissing First Nation – Tracy Hanzlik, Member
Ms. Hanzlik shared that Nipissing First Nations is mourning the loss of Mauriel Sawyer, Deputy Chief, who was noted for her longstanding career as an educator and language keeper. Ms. Sawyer dedicated her life's work to improving education, not only in NFN but in many other First Nations throughout the Anishinabek territory. With great sadness, SEAC expressed their deepest condolences.
- ii) LDAO – Marie Derosier, Member
NIL Report
- iii) Community Living – April Porter, Alternate Member
Community Living North Bay is getting ready to participate in a Spread the Word Campaign beginning March 3, 2021. Ms. Porter encouraged SEAC to Spread the Word Connection and take a pledge.
- iv) Parent Representative – Mary Grise, Member
NIL Report
- v) NDSS - Jeannie Boissonneault, Member
NIL Report

9. QUESTIONS & ANSWERS / OTHER
NIL

10. DATE OF NEXT SEAC MEETING
The next SEAC meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2021 at 5:30 pm via Teams.

11. ADJOURNMENT
Moved by Barb McCool and seconded by John Willemsen THAT the meeting of February 9, 2021 adjourned at 6:37 p.m.