



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC)

Thursday, September 14, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Grimsby Lincoln Room – Education Centre

MINUTES

Committee Members Present:

Linda Morrice (Chair)	Pathstone Mental Health
Shannon MacDonald (Vice-Chair)	CNIB
Nick Smith	Niagara Support Services
Stephanie McCorriston	Learning Disabilities Association Niagara Region
Dale Robinson	Trustee, District School Board of Niagara

Administration/Resource:

John Dickson	Superintendent of Special Education
Paula MacKinnon	Superintendent of Secondary Schools
Nikki Train	Student Achievement Leader: Special Education
Jennifer Currie	OPC Representative: Elementary
Karen Ferguson	OPC Representative: Secondary
Kelly Irvine-Minor	Special Education Consultant

Regrets:

Jen Ajandi, Trustee, District School Board of Niagara
Tiffany Hunter, Association for Bright Children of Ontario
Amy Dunn, Autism Ontario, Niagara Chapter
Danielle Reynolds, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder – ONE
Brent Beaudoin, VOICE

Recording Secretary:

Sue Sentance

QUORUM/CALL TO ORDER

Chair Linda Morrice declared that quorum was not established, and therefore no decisions were made regarding any discussions during the evening. The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting began at 6:04 p.m.

Superintendent Dickson welcomed Stephanie McCorriston, Alternate Representative from Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara, to her first SEAC meeting.

WELCOME – STUDENT VOICE Superintendent Dickson introduced the Principal of Carleton Public School, Phil Schulyer, who in turn introduced the committee to a grade eight student, his mother, and the team of staff

members working with the student at Carleton. The student transitioned to Carleton PS in grade 7 and explained how he was nervous about being in a new school. With the support of his teachers and parents, the student uses a computer to keep himself organized and other tools like a worry book, to further improve his learning and success. The student expressed that his favourite subject is math, and that he is looking forward to going to Laura Secord Secondary School next year.

WELCOME BACK & ORIENTATION

John Dickson

DSBN committee members made a welcome back presentation highlighting the improvements that have been happening throughout the DSBN; including the opening of Greater Fort Erie Secondary School, the construction of new synthetic turf fields at 5 secondary schools, and the completion of many renovations and accessibility upgrades at various elementary and secondary schools throughout the board. In addition, the DSBN hired new teachers, educational assistants and a social worker, made possible by increased special education funding and contract negotiations, to accommodate the increase in student population for 2017-18.

An orientation session outlined policies and legislation pertaining to special education and to the SEAC, and the roles of the members and agencies that are represented on SEAC. The committee discussed effective practices with respect to meetings, as well as the guidelines by which the committee functions. The committee discussed topics for future SEAC Agendas including having each association member make a brief presentation to the committee about the association they represent. Linda Morrice delivered a brief presentation on the agency that she represents - Pathstone Mental Health. Shannon MacDonald, from the CNIB volunteered to make her presentation at the October meeting. Copies of the Special Education Report and Budget Report 2017-18 were provided to committee members.

NOMINATION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Nominations could not take place for a chair and vice-chair for 2017-18 as quorum was not established, so elections will take place in October. Both Linda Morrice, Chair and Shannon MacDonald, Vice-Chair have expressed an interest in remaining in their current position.

ASSOCIATION AND BOARD INFORMATION

CNIB

Shannon MacDonald

No report

Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara

Stephanie McCorriston

LDANR's AGM will take place on September 14, 2017, and LDAO's AGM will take place on September 20, 2017. The Association is offering their S.M.A.R.T. Math Program again this fall. Program Applications close September 18th. October is LD Awareness month. Stephanie will contact the DSBN communication department with posters to distribute to the schools.

Niagara Support Services

Nick Smith

Niagara Support Services AGM will take place on September 19, 2017. The Association will be offering a Teen and a Movement program beginning in October. NSS is hosting a "One Small Step" Walk on September 17th at Oaks Park in Niagara Falls. The walk is a fundraiser and awareness event for Prader Willi Syndrome. Registration opens at 10am and the walk begins at 11.

TRUSTEE, DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA

Dale Robinson

First Board Meeting will take place September 26th.

OPC Representative: Secondary

Karen Ferguson

Karen has a new placement this year as Vice-Principal at Stamford Collegiate. She is enjoying the exciting start to the new year as students begin new classes this fall.

OPC Representative: Elementary**Jennifer Currie**

It has been a fantastic start to 2017-18. September staffing reallocations are just ending and for schools that have to re-organize, it will happen tomorrow afternoon. In-school teams are working through their buildings talking about students and catching up on any changes. Many new students have enrolled and transitions have occurred.

Student Achievement Leader: Special Education**Nikki Train**

Educational Assistant re-allocation has been completed. The DSBN has an open posting for EA's and Nikki asked the group to reach out to anyone who is qualified and might be interested in this posting to contact the board with a resume.

The board is working with a new company to process SEA Claims, that brings a great new vision with respect to improving student learning.

Special Education Consultant**Kelly Irvine-Minor**

The special education team hosted their first Professional Learning session for the year, welcoming many new LRT's to the role. Everyone was partnered with a mentor LRT to assist them in their new role. Secondary Learning Communities will begin their Professional Learning shortly.

Superintendent of Secondary Schools**Paula MacKinnon**

Secondary Schools experienced a great start-up again this year. Secondary school staff will receive training on the early release day tomorrow, on the new format for Progress Reports. Progress Reports will go out to parents in approximately 5 to 6 weeks.

Superintendent of Special Education**John Dickson**

DSBN will have good EQAO news to share with the committee next month in all areas including Elementary, Secondary & Special Education. Superintendent Dickson shared a PIC Conference brochure highlighting the November 1st conference as a great resource and networking opportunity for parents.

Pathstone Mental Health**Linda Morrice**

Staff are receiving CPS – Tier 2 training on September 27 and 28, 2017. Pathstone's has a contract position available for an Indigenous Case Manager. Pathstone – Contact Niagara AGM will be in a Family BBQ format this year and held on September 20, 2017 from 4 to 6 pm at Grantham Lions Park.

ABC Niagara**Tiffany Hunter**

The "Twice Exceptional Conference" will take place on Sunday, September 17, 2017 from 12:30 to 5pm at 851 Mt Pleasant Rd, Toronto, ON M4P 2L5

VOICE (for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Kids)**Brent Beaudoin**

Summer VOICE camp at Bark Lake was at near full capacity again this past August. Deaf and hard of hearing kids, along with their parents and siblings enjoy making new friends, and participated in many activities and presentations. The Spring VOICE Conference will be a 2 day workshop in late May (dates tbd) and will be held at Sheridan College in Toronto. Day one is for industry professionals – LRT's, Teachers, Audiologists etc. and Day 2 will focus on parents and providing them with updates and other topics of interest.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

There were no questions

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 7:08 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS:

Welcome Back & Orientation Presentation
DSBN Special Education Report 2017-18
DSBN Budget Report 2017-2018, pages 18 & 19 - Special Education Budget
DSBN PIC Conference Registration brochure

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. – Grimsby-Lincoln Room