



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, March 25, 2021

VIRTUAL

Google Meet Link: meet.google.com/csg-kssu-gvn

6:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

Chairperson: Arlene Godby

Vice-chairperson: Melissa Gillespie

Members: Arlene Godby (Chair), Melissa Gillespie, Shawna Belcourt, Kelly Smigielski, Helen McCarthy, Emmanuel Pinto

Guests: Jennifer Angelo, Mandy Hamu, Christine Haffie, Erin O'Sullivan

Administration: Laurie Corrigan, Cynthia Chan Reynolds, Laura Di Ianni, Joan Carragher

Recorder: Vicki Blakely

Absent (by motion): Sandra Scott, Clare Paterson

A. Call to Order:

1. Land Acknowledgment: Kelly Smigielski

As we continue to learn together in these exceptional circumstances, I (we) would like to acknowledge, as we do at school, that this land on which we live and learn daily, is the traditional territory of the Michi Saagig (Mississauga) Anishnaabe. All of PVNC Catholic District School Board lies within the Williams Treaty territory and we are all Treaty people. We offer our gratitude to the First Peoples of this land who continue to care for, and share their teachings about, our earth and our relations. May we honour those teachings.

2. Opening Prayer: Kelly Smigielski

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Kelly Smigielski

Seconded by: Helen McCarthy

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

4. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None noted.

5. Motion for Excusal from Attendance

Moved by: Melissa Gillespie

Seconded by: Kelly Smigielski

That Clare Paterson and Sandra Scott be excused from attendance at the March 25, 2021 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting.

Carried

6. Motion for Approval of the Minutes of February 18, 2021 Meeting.

Moved by: Kelly Smigielski

Seconded by: Melissa Gillespie

That the minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Minutes held on February 18, 2021 be approved as presented.

Carried

7. Business Arising from the Minutes:

There was none.

B. Recommended Actions/Presentations:

1. PVNCCDSB Strategic Priorities: Director of Education, Joan Carragher

Joan Carragher discussed the Strategic Plan renewal that was deferred last year by the Board of Trustees. In reviewing and renewing that strategic plan, all key stakeholders are being consulted. A presentation was made of the current strategic plan, priorities and goals. Stakeholder consultation is being sought through attendance of committees, survey, the use of thought exchange and communication with the Director's office. At the end of the presentation Joan Carragher opened the floor up to SEAC members to give feedback on what we can do better, and where we should focus.

Feedback from the committee was given in the areas of IEP communication, Transition Planning, and communication overload for families throughout the entire Board. Members both present and absent were encouraged to email the Director of Education with any further feedback.

2. Remarks: Chairperson (Arlene Godby)

There has been a lot of input for the member reports being submitted now. A lot of good information is being shared. The Correspondence section has been added to the SEAC agenda that will be discussed further when that portion of the agenda is discussed.

3. Remarks: Superintendent of Learning (Laurie Corrigan, *Superintendent of Learning/Special Education*)

The Board website continues to be a good source for current information as change seems to be the constant theme throughout COVID-19.

Asymptomatic testing for staff and students at our schools has gotten underway. Testing has been open to 10 schools in Clarington with 207 tests completed and 1 positive Covid case detected. It moved to St. Thomas Aquinas CSS last week and will continue this Saturday serving our schools in the City of Kawartha Lakes region. The next testing location will be decided through working with the three public health units.

New protocol for single symptom quarantine and isolation has meant an average of 20 employees absent daily. Centrally located consultants and itinerant teachers, including Special Education Services, have been deployed to alleviate these vacancies when the school is not able to cover the vacancies/classes.

Although no specific direction has been given by the Ministry of Education, PVNCCDSB is planning for a virtual school for September. After completing a survey, 500-700 currently want their children to attend virtual school in the fall. There is a need from PVNCCDSB families for virtual school. Parents will be asked to complete a survey April 1-11 registering for the full year of virtual learning.

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test has been waived for this year. PVNCCDSB has planned to move forward with testing this year, but will also provide opportunities next year.

Superintendent Jeannie Armstrong presented to the Board of Trustees on the destreaming of mathematics (no longer applied and academic courses in grade 9 math. Further direction from the Ministry is needed, but planning is underway for professional learning for the secondary May PA day and August PA days. The learning will coincide and collaborate with equity training as it relates to destreaming. Locally developed courses for students that are not able to access curriculum will be offered as we move forward.

The Government of Ontario announced the budget for the next year with many announcements related to schooling, including remote learning technology, anti-racism, mental health, special needs to access services, and in secondary schools' specialist high skills programs. The Board is awaiting to hear how this announcement will impact PVNCCSDB. Updates will be brought and shared with SEAC when available.

Summer programs in special education and mental health and wellbeing are expected to be offered again this summer and are awaiting information for planning. The hope is to offer the summer learning program similar to last year.

Marjorie Maguire, autism spectrum disorder worker in the CASA program at St. Mary CSS in Cobourg recently passed away. Marjorie, her family, and the staff of St. Mary CSS are in our prayers.

4. Update from Trustees:

Emmanuel Pinto

Looking forward to discussing the PAAC Survey results.

Helen McCarthy

Also looking forward to discussing the PAAC Survey results.

C. Discussion Items:

A. SEAC Meeting Presentations

1. Mental Health Strategies and Support for Students – Dr. Cynthia Chan-Reynolds, Board Psychologist, Jennifer Angelo, Mental Health Lead, and Mandy Hamu, Mental Health Lead

The presentation discussed the 3 areas of focus, Students, Staff and Families as it applies to mental health and well-being within our board. The presentation discussed the strategies, professional development, supports and resources available to staff, students and families of PVNCCDSB. Highlighted in the presentation was the Summer Transition program that had 90% of students that engaged in the program attending school in-person and the Community Resource for All Families of PVNC where the document is broken down by region and then 12 different categories that include information on how to access the services. The Be Well Strategy is currently in the renewal processes.

Discussion Items from the presentation:

The committee discussed the key learnings from the presentation. The effort that has gone into the parent resources has been critical, especially this year. Knowing how to get the service is such a huge piece for PVNCCDSB families. The highlight of the Summer Transitions Program success was great to hear and is key to helping families get in the door.

2. PAAC Survey Results

Discussion Items

- I. What surprised you in the survey results?
 - a. PVNCCDSB at times has had difficulties filling vacancies on the SEAC, whereas many SEACs have had a competition of vacancies.
 - b. In regards to Question 4 of the report, to the knowledge of attendees at the SEAC meeting, the use of member issued Minority Reports has never been exercised and many members were not aware of their existence.
 - c. Question 13, that very few boards actually consult their SEAC when planning how to assist students with special education needs.
 - d. Glad to see the PAAC on SEAC Effective Practices Handbook for SEAC Members (2016). The PVNCCDSB SEAC has distributed the

- handbook via email and reviewed the handbook a portion at a time with the committee.
- e. That trustees are familiar with the Special Education Budget and Special Education Plan. At PVNCCDSB this will be coming forward at a future meeting with the Superintendent of Business and Finance in attendance.
 - f. That the Effective Practices state that SEAC should be provided with a summary balance sheet, income statement and a statement of change in financial position annually.
 - g. Creating e-blasts and communication in effective practices in Question 9; could SEAC be putting out a newsletter like this to parents for them to learn more about presentations at meetings. Being included on the school Week at a Glance for reminders of meetings, agendas and minutes, website resources.
 - h. Question 16 – SEAC making motions to the board of trustees. The committee discussed past practices and if this is something going forward they would like to become practice. Past practice would make recommended action in the form of a letter from SEAC to the Board of Trustees, similar to that of a letter under correspondence.
- i. What promising practices are suggested?
 - a. What parts of the handbook do we need to review? As well as a Power Point we should share
 - b. Reviewing and becoming more familiar with key Ministry Documents – *Special Education in Ontario Kindergarten to grade 12 policy and Resource Guide*.
 - c. Getting more familiar with some of the other advisory committees within PVNCCDSB and knowing the roles of the advisory committee.
 - ii. How are they reflected at PVNC and what could be considered?
 - a. Develop and discuss ways to communicate the information to families. As SEAC mentioned, we have provided the agenda and minutes within the time period.
 - b. Provide with ministry letters from the superintendent that the committee should be reviewing.
 - c. Professional Development
 - i. Past practice has had professional development days communicated to SEAC but without input.
 - ii. Previously, the SEAC has been invited to professional development days where they provided similar to an open house and handed out brochures/information form the member organizations. At these they were able to connect with Special Education Resource Teachers and Special Education Services Support Staff.
 - iii. It would be beneficial to have input on Professional Development and the dates of when it's offered going forward.
 - d. Partnerships that we have in place – have good partnerships with our community groups so we can have the sharing.
 - e. Data that we're given from the Board to SEAC is very much appreciated, transparency, always being told and updated – not all groups seem to have this sharing according to the report.

- f. There was nothing glaring from the report that PVNCCDSB SEAC is lacking on. There is places to improve but there were no big gaps.

Moved by: Kelly Smigielski

Seconded by: Emmanuel Pinto

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be extended from 8:00 p.m. to 8:05 p.m.

Carried

B. Correspondence Items:

1. HPEDSB – Letter to HPEPH Medical Officer of Health re: Prioritization of vaccinations during Phase II in support of students with Special Education Needs and their staff was received for information and filing.

C. Information Items:

1. Information items/updates were received by the following organizations as per the attachments to the March 25, 2021 Agenda Package:
 - i. Autism Ontario re: Statement on Guilty Verdict in Toronto Van Attack Trial has Lasting Implications for Autism Community
 - ii. Empowered Kids Ontario – Scholarship Applications
 - iii. Community Living Trent Highlands – Update
 - iv. PYS & NCC – New Partnership
 - v. Ontario – Employment Project for Youth with Disabilities
 - vi. CCRC – Peaceful Families – Virtual Group
 - vii. Grandview Kids – Update
 - viii. Autism Ontario Peterborough – Update
 - ix. Autism Ontario: Raise the Flag and World Autism Day During Covid-19 – As we excitedly plan and prepare for World Autism Day and Raise the Flag 2021, we are committed to promoting the safety of our community above all else. It is highly unlikely that we will be able to gather in large groups for the usual flag-raising ceremonies, so we encourage everyone to recognize the day creatively – in your living room, backyard, on a Zoom call – any way you'd like! Because World Autism Day, April 2nd, is on Good Friday this year, we will be celebrating on Tuesday, April 6th.

D. Old Business:

None noted.

E. New Business:

None noted.

D. Next Meeting:

1. 2020-2021 Meeting Dates:

Thursday, April 29, 2021 – Role of EA Facilitator

Thursday, May 27, 2021 – Teacher of the Blind

Thursday, June 17, 2021 – Role of the Special Education Consultant

Budget & Spec. Ed. Staffing, and Special Education Plan Review
10th Meeting PD/TBD

Location: Virtually

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

3. Selection of Members for Territorial Recognition, Opening and Closing Prayers:
 - a. Territorial Recognition and Opening Prayer: Emmanuel Pinto
 - b. Closing Prayer: Emmanuel Pinto

E. Conclusion:

1. Closing Prayer: Melissa Gillespie
2. Adjournment

Moved by: Kelly Smigielski

Seconded by: Melissa Gillespie

That the meeting held on March 25, 2021 be adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Carried