

The Minutes of the Special Education Committee Meeting held on Sept 17th, 2020 at 6:30 pm In person and via Google Meet.

Present

Members: Helen McCarthy, Melissa Gillespie, Arlene Godby, Kelly Smigielski
Shawna Belcourt, Emmanuel Pinto, Clare Paterson

Guest: Jennifer Angelo, Della Stewart-Figuera

Absent (by motion): Sandra Scott

Administration: Laurie Corrigan, Laura Dilanni, Dr. Cynthia Chan Reynolds, Michael
Nasello

Recorder: Alexa Purves

A. Call to Order:

1. Opening Prayer:

Emmanuel led the group on prayer

2. Land Acknowledgment:

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.

3. Motion to Approve Agenda

Motion: The agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

None noted

5. Motion for Excusal from Attendance

Motion: R.A. That, Sandra Scott be excused from attendance at the
Sept 17, 2020 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting.

Carried

6. Approval of the Minutes of the June 18, 2020 Meeting.

Motion: The minutes be approved as presented
Carried

7. Business Arising from the Minutes:
None noted.

B. Recommended Actions/Presentations:

1. Remarks: Chairperson (Arlene)
Welcome back all, happy to see people face to face again.
We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the Traynor family in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time for their family.
2. Remarks: Superintendent of Learning (Laurie Corrigan, Superintendent of Learning/ Special Education)
Laurie welcomed Michael Nasello, Director of Education;
2400 students are attending St. Thomas Aquinas Virtual Catholic School, virtually. 348 of these students are exceptional. EA support will be provided virtually for those students who were to receive it face to face at home school. Students in the virtual school will remain linked to their home school.

Laurie highlighted the new and returning Special Education Department staff members; Dr. Cynthia Chan Reynolds, Psychologist; Laura Dilanni, Vice Principal of Special Education; Jeff Hockett, Chantal Bouillion, Steve Williams & Lynda Thomas, Special Education Consultants; Leeann Gifford, Special Education Support Staff (SESS) Facilitator; Layna Desormeau, Shelley Powell & Christina Tosti, Itinerant SESS; Alanna Gujarati & Deborah Leung, Speech Language Pathologists; Erin Brown, Early Years Social Worker. As well, the addition of the Mental Health Lead, Mandy Hamu, which was a recommendation put forward by SEAC at the June meeting.

Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic District School Board (PVNCCDSB) ran a first face to face return through a Transitions program. The Transitions program was a 2-week long school session in August to help students transition back to school after 6 months at home.
3. Update from Trustees:
Emmanuel expressed his gratitude for the hard work provided by the Special Education department in the opening of schools.
Trustees held 3 meetings over the summer months. Michael also added that twice a week meetings were held with the public health department in order to take next steps. Trustees have been very supportive.
4. SEAC Meeting Topics for 20/21 School Year
Please review topics for this school year as indicated.

C. Discussion Items:

A short discussion of the presentation took place

D. Information Items:

Reports from SEAC members
No reports were given

Return to School

Laurie directed the committee to the Board's website for review of Return to School Plan, Return to School Parent/Guardian FAQ, overview of St. Thomas Aquinas Virtual School. The website also contains links to the Covid-19 advisor page and Communication Protocol and Self-Assessment Tool.

Positive cases and any outbreaks of Covid-19 in schools will be communicated through the board's website. Individual staff and student's personal information will NOT be shared. Ill staff and students are expected to follow the online self- assessment and not return until symptoms are resolved for 24 hrs.

It was stated that the self-assessment tool will be helpful for parents and teachers that have an exceptional student who could be hard to diagnose. The self-assessment tool is being communicated to the public through Twitter and is being sent out in parent communications and through school messenger. All transportation is still running through Superintendent, Isabel Grace.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Transitions Program – J. Angelo

Jennifer shared a presentation regarding the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy of the Transitions Program. The program was implemented in order to help exceptional and anxious students return to the classroom.

Cynthia informed the group that the support staff, Social Workers, Mental Health Lead, Psychologist and Psychometrist will be supporting virtually as much as possible.

Chaplains will be available in Secondary schools and Fr. Paul will support the elementary schools. Priests will not be going into schools but will be using Google meet.

E. Old Business:

F. New Business:

G. Next Meeting:

Thursday, October 15th, 2020, 6:30-8:00pm
Special Education Department Plan and Third Party Provider
Location: Catholic Education Center

Opening/Closing Prayer : Clare

H. Conclusion:

1. Closing Prayer: Laura closed the meeting with prayer
2. Adjournment.
Motion: The meeting be adjourned
Carried