



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

October 20, 2021

PRESENT: Committee Members: M. Guenette, B. Morris, A. MacKenzie,
D. Lacombe, N. Tabbert, A. Bergeron

Administration: J. Poirier, B. Smith, M. Ingram, C. Barber, S. Smith, A.
Hilts, L. Rigby, A. Macdougall

Guests: Communication Manager J. Laderoute

ABSENT: (With Regrets)

1. CALL TO ORDER

B. Smith called the meeting to order.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA OF 20 October 2021

MOVED BY D. Lacombe, seconded by A. MacKenzie, that the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda for today's meeting.

The motion was CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 15 September 2021

No minutes as the September 15, 2021 meeting did not have a quorum.

The motion was CARRIED

4. STAFF UPDATES

Presentation on the Accessibility for Ontarioians with Disabilities Act was made by RCDSB Communications Manager J. Laderoute. Link to complete RCDSB Accessibility Survey found at the [RCDSB website](#) or [RCDSB Accessibility Survey](#)

L. Rigby presented the [RCDSB Special Education October Stats](#)

M. Ingram shared that start up has been very busy and they are supporting schools as best they can.

S. Smith stated that they have found that startup has been more difficult this year. The impact of Covid is noticeable in the area of students and educator well being. Transitions to school for our primary students, particularly kindergarten, has been difficult as 18 months is a long time when speaking about skill development and social development for young children. As a team we have been working to support schools in developing and revising safety plans and developing plans for skill building.

The team has been working with SERTs on IEPs (Individual Education Plans), which were sent home on October 20, 2021. Our multi sensory spaces have begun to reopen with guidelines around cohorting of students, individual supplies of items and shared items of students. We are also reviewing our MSR manuals with our ESP members.

L. Rigby, A. MacDougall-Popke and S. Smith are currently working on a grade 5 Math Pilot project with numeracy coaches, classroom teachers and SERTs from Herman Street PS, Cobden PS and Queen Elizabeth PS.

C. Barber shared that secondary programming support has been ongoing for both in person and remote students. I have also been completing IPRC meetings and hope to have completed them by the end of October. There is continued transition planning happening as we are still receiving students in our schools that have complex needs.

Make the Cut will be a virtual event again this year and is being held on November 24th, and is available to our grade 12 students.

A. MacDougall-Popke shared that she is continuing with SEA (Special Equipment Allotment) management and purchasing. There was a large number of students that required an update to their equipment, which has now been completed. Supporting new SERTS as well as support for OSSLT (grade 10 literacy test) There was a lot of prep completed last year for the OSSLT, but it did not proceed mainly due to a return to learning at home. The digital version is new to our schools and we are making sure everyone has access, including our students who require extra accommodations.

6. REPORT FROM THE BOARD

B. Morris shared that the Committees meeting took place on Tuesday the 12th of October. There were presentations made on summer learning programs that took place this past summer. Including in secondary - e Learning courses, summer co-op opportunities, as well as 17 of our students were fortunate to participate in a Dual Credit Program that was in partnership with Algonquin College. These students were provided an opportunity to earn one college credit as well as one high school credit. There

was a full summer learning program for primary students focusing on literacy and numeracy as well as intervention programs in literacy and numeracy for junior and intermediate students. 160 students participated in this program.

The RCDSB renewed Strategic Plan was recently released. This year we will be restarting our Secondary Review that we had begun prior to the pandemic. Some of the areas being reviewed are our student success initiatives and program pathways. We will also be reviewing ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in preparation for the next three year cycle. FSL (French as a Second Language) at the elementary level is continuing to be monitored and reviewed for future implementation as per the multi year expansion plan. Special Services is also continuing to be reviewed for program implementation and monitoring based on recommendations made in the Special Education Review 2019. Boar Administration is also being reviewed by senior staff to ensure compliance with Ministry directives as related to system wide infrastructure.

We also had a report on the annual action plan on Mental Health and Wellness reported by Mental Health Lead Lisa Lariviere .

Lastly, following years of decline in enrollment we are fortunate this year to have an increase of 303 elementary students.

7. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

A. MacKenzie shared that PMFRC had undergone an accreditation review. They are hopeful to get accredited again. They are experiencing more requests from families for mental health and family counselling or virtual programs. They are gradually moving into in person support as the base has given permission for public swimming etc. Which allows families more opportunity to connect and more opportunities for young children to have increased social interactions.

A. MacKenzie will be hosting Zoom sessions with our regional contact for Autism Ontario providing a connection for families to talk to her and brainstorm ideas and what their unmet needs are in eastern ontario. It is a chance for families to share what programs and services they are looking for.

D. Lacombe shared that since September FCS has had an increase in communication from families in regard to transitioning to school. A lot of increased mental health issues for families. We have a lot of transitions within our case workers currently. There is a restructuring and change happening to Autism ONtario that affects our organization. The coordinated service planning program that has not felt the impact of the large numbers of ASD like it has in other areas because we do have that case management function of our children service coordination so it is the one baring that load currently and we are looking forward to see the changes that may come with the OAP program and how it may change our work and how it will help us to get to depth of work that we don't get to usually as we struggle in our children service coordination program with the caseload numbers. In that program we have 3 service coordinators and over 500 children in Renfrew County, which makes it difficult to meet all the needs.

There is a transformation that will be happening in the Complex Special Needs Programming within the Ministry of Community and Social Services. They are currently participating in a third party review. The purpose is to boost core clinical services and have better prevention before these children and families are in crisis.

A.Bergeron shared that she will be representing VOICE which is an organization open to parents and families who have children who are deaf and hard of hearing. They provide opportunities for families to get together and interact with other children who are deaf and hard of hearing and offer support. There are chapters throughout Ontario. They host community events and activities as well as public education.

8. NEXT MEETING

November 17, 2021

10. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by B. Morris, seconded by D. Lacombe, that the meeting adjourned at 5:11 pm

The motion was CARRIED.