



RENFREW COUNTY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
**Minutes of the Special Education Advisory
Committee Meeting**



Held on Wednesday January 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
Virtual TEAMS Meeting

PRESENT:	Pat O'Grady	Chair, Trustee
	Cory Lee McMunn	Member at Large
	Jacki England	Member at Large
	Jennifer Debenham	Community Living
	Jodi Cotnam	Learning Disabilities of Ontario
	Kayla Bouret	Member at Large
	Mike Ellis	Member at Large
	Sandra Dee Lapierre	Member at Large
RESOURCE:	Clint Young	Superintendent of Education
REGRETS:	Joanne Lesk	Member at Large
ABSENT:	Daniella Santos	Member at Large
	Gen Leonard	Member at Large
	Kristiana Guzman	Member at Large

1. Prayer and Land Acknowledgement

The SEAC Chair opened the meeting with a prayer and Land Acknowledgement at 6:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION 1: 12 JAN 2022

Moved By: Jacki England
Seconded By: Mike Ellis

That the agenda for the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of 12 January 2022 be approved.

Carried/...

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared.

4. Presentation – Special Education Overview – Scott Nichol

Two board-wide system positions responsible for school effectiveness were recently established to better serve students. Scott Nichol was the successful candidate for Principal for School Effectiveness with Special Education responsibilities. He was welcomed to the meeting and gave a brief history of his professional and personal background in the area of special education and outlined some of his roles and responsibilities. As a liaison between

school administration, special education coordinators, families, and community agencies, Scott develops layers of key support for students with special education needs. Prior to the school year commencing, support allocation matrices are developed which determine distribution of EA services for students. As the school year begins, the support allocations are carefully monitored, and in conjunction with multi-disciplinary teams consisting of special education teachers, coordinators and staff from the mental health and wellness teams, student requirements are discussed, modified and supported throughout the school year. As principal of the Valleycrest day treatment programs, Scott supports students and families, and maintains contact with outside agency services such as the Phoenix Centre and also represents the RCCDSB on Community Care Assess. Provincial wide dialogue is maintained through participation in the Regional Special Education Committee of Eastern Ontario network.

In addition to the special education portfolios, Scott is the re-engagement lead with the board, and is responsible to identify, track and support students who are not engaged in learning. Levels of improvement are measured during the first and second terms, and curriculum supports are put in place to carefully motivate and improve outcomes.

Scott was thanked for spending his evening updating SEAC on the highlights of his new portfolio. It was mentioned by several SEAC members who have had previous contact with Scott, that his patience, understanding and expertise in the field of special education made him an excellent and valued candidate for the role.

5. Approval of Minutes from 10 November 2021

MOTION 2: 12 JAN 2021

Moved By: Jennifer Debenham
Seconded By: Mike Ellis

That the minutes from the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of 10 November 2021 be approved.

Carried/...

6. Board Reports

a. Re-Animation of Board Vision Statement

This item was deferred from the November 2021 meeting due to time constraints. The current Vision Statement was first developed in 1990, and was re-animated in 2002. On the September 24th, 2021 PA Day, the RCCDSB community came together to re-animate the Vision, to ascertain relevance of the statement today and to update, change or refresh content. As part of this process, important input was requested from stakeholder groups, such as SEAC. A link was provided to the six-question survey that asks participants specific questions about the current statement, with completion requested prior to the deadline of Monday, January 17, 2022. Input will be tabulated,

and suggested changes will be unveiled at the Christian Community Day event in May of 2022.

b. **Waterloo Region District School Board Letter**

A copy of a letter sent to the Honourable Stephen Leece was received from the Waterloo Regional District School Board. The letter stated that not all boards have the same access and resources in online learning environments, and the WRDSB requested the Ministry commits to ensuring all online and/or learning courses are consistently maintained with enabled links and resources that meet accessibility standards. The RCCDSB has encountered similar difficulties within Renfrew County, and will draft a letter to the Ministry in support of provincial equity for online learning resources.

MOTION 3: 12 JAN 2021

Moved By: Jacki England
Seconded By: Sandra Dee Lapierre

That the SEAC Committee drafts a letter to the Ministry of Education in support of the effort to secure equitable online learning resources across the province.

Carried/...

c. **Virtual Learning Update – Special Education**

The province suspended face-to-face learning in all schools after the Christmas break in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19. The Ministry of Education mandated specific criteria to allow some students with complex needs that could not be accommodated with online learning to continue to attend school. Mobilization efforts with families, special education teachers, educational assistants and transportation services enabled 70 students to return to classes in 18 RCCDSB schools on January 7th.

d. **Special Education Report – Section B**

SEAC members reviewed Section B of the Special Education Report in order to make updates and changes for submission of the 2021-2022 report in June.

A suggestion was made to change wording for “teachers” to “educational staff” in specific sections to reflect the roles educational assistants play in special education.

Members also questioned the validity of some ministry provided definitions of exceptionalities, as the current version seems outdated and no longer relevant.

7. Association Reports

Learning Disabilities: The Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa Carleton is providing tutoring for reading and writing interventions, JUMP math and two social skills groups for younger and older students. Registration is open to registered and non-registered members, with a sliding fee schedule in place for parents to recoup some costs.

8. Next Meeting

The next SEAC meeting will take place on **Wednesday, 09 February 2022.**

9. Adjournment

The SEAC meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.