Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 13, 2023
11:45 p.m.
Northeastern Catholic District School Board

MINUTES

PRESENT: **Debbie Chornobey, YMCA**
Ellen Renaud, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services
Colleen Landers, NCDSB Trustee
Stan Skalecki, NCDSB Trustee
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Amber Smith-Come, School Principal St. Anne School
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Lisa Lamarche, Behavior & Autism Worker
Kim McEntee, Mental Health Supervisor
Katie Mundle, Special Assignment Teacher
Jean Ethier, Education Services Officer / Recorder

EXCUSED: **Billie Richer, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children**
Sabrina Gravel, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre
Ryley Reis, Canadian Mental Health Association
Julia Spadetto-Forward, School Principal St. Jerome School

1. **Welcome, Prayer and Territorial Acknowledgment**
   Colleen welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer and territorial acknowledgement.

2. **Approval of Agenda**
   MOVED BY: Stan Skalecki
   BY: Ellen Renaud SECONDED
   THAT the agenda be approved as presented
   CARRIED.

3. **Approval of Minutes**
   MOVED BY: Ellen Renaud
   BY: Stan Skalecki SECONDED
   THAT the minutes be approved as presented
   CARRIED.

4. **Elections - Chair**
   Daphne Brumwell opened the nomination process. Ellen nominated Colleen Landers as Chair of SEAC. Stan SECONDED the nomination. Colleen accepted the nomination. Nominations were closed and Daphne Brumwell declared Colleen Landers, Chair of SEAC from December 2023 to June 2024.

   Motion
   MOVED BY: S. Skalecki
   SECONDED BY: E. Renaud

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the members of Northeastern Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) appoint Colleen Landers as Chair of SEAC from December 2023 to June 2024.

CARRIED

Election of Vice-Chair

Daphne opened the nomination process. Ellen nominated Stan Skalecki as Vice-Chair of SEAC. Stan accepted the nomination. Nominations were closed and Daphne Brumwell declared Stan Skalecki, Vice-Chair of SEAC from December 2023 to June 2024.

Motion

MOVED BY: C. Landers
SECONDED BY: E. Renaud

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the members of Northeastern Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) appoint Stan Skalecki as Vice-Chair of SEAC from December 2023 to June 2024.

CARRIED

5. **Interim Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding Approach**

In the 2023–24 school year, the Ministry is undertaking a review to modernize the SIP Allocation and temporarily adjusting the SIP funding approach by using a formula to calculate the amount for each school board. Accordingly, SIP funding for each school board for 2023–24 is allocated based on the school board's historical SIP funding amounts plus a growth rate applied. (We would normally be completing SIP applications now!) This has not typically been a large source of revenue in special education, but not having to do the work is greatly appreciated this year.

6. **Professional Assessments**

We have received a significant amount of funding this year to support the completion of assessments (just over $110,000 including the normal board budget allocation). We are choosing to use these funds largely to support psychological assessments. We hope to complete somewhere in the neighbourhood of 40-50 assessments. Our focus will be on those students most in need of an assessment and those in our self-contained classrooms. We are also looking at those students with complex needs who might need a more extensive assessment.

7. **IEP Audit**

We have begun the IEP Audit for this year. Katie and Catherine have scheduled a day with each school to work through 5 IEPs together and then to have the school team work through 5. Principals have been asked to ensure they have made themselves available for this work. We continue to focus on improving the overall content of IEPs, and in particular the alignment between assessment information and the expectations and strategies selected to support the student. With the revisions to the Ontario Language Curriculum, we have had to rethink some of what we are doing with the IEP. So many of our students are currently missing foundational language skills that we have had to decide what is worthy of an IEP and what might need to be tackled first through whole-class instruction.

8. **SEA Technology Data Collection**

Each year, we get about $89,000 to use towards SEA technology. Given that we are a board that already have a 1-1 computer program, we seem to have neglected to charge back the technology being used by our special education students for the past few years. This has resulted in a large surplus of funds in SEA technology. We are currently conducting an inventory to ensure that we have accurate numbers and the appropriate documentation (in the IEP and in the student file). Once we have this information, we will ensure that the lease cost and the cost of Lexia and IXL are recorded and charged to this allocation of funds.

9. **NCDSB Math Board Action Plan**

Last month, the NCDSB Math Board Action Plan was presented to the board of trustees. Daphne provided a copy of the plan to the SEAC members and highlighted the data and strategies that directly impact special education. The Math Board Action Plan can be found on pages 5-8 of the minutes.

10. **Fall Aimsweb+ Data**

Daphne shared the cohort data from the Aimsweb+ Oral Reading Fluency assessment. The green highlighted cells indicate improvement for the cohort from the fall of 2022 to the fall of 2023. It is important to note that we included grade 1-3 French Immersion students in the data last year and did not this year. This is not a student-by-student comparison as some students may have left or joined a cohort. It is great to see that 6/8 grades have seen an improvement. It is very exciting to see the impact on Grade 1. We are moving in the right direction! Reading fluency is something that I have asked the leads and RTs to work on with teachers. This is a fairly easy thing to improve with practice provided the student has the skills. In the upper grades we have noted that most student are able to read the passage with good accuracy, but they lack the necessary speed. We can work on that.

% of Students at Risk by Grade - COHORT COMPARISON Fall 2022 to Fall 2023														
School	Gr. 1 2022	Gr. 2 2023	Gr. 2 2022	Gr. 3 2023	Gr. 3 2022	Gr. 4 2023	Gr. 4 2022	Gr. 5 2023	Gr. 5 2022	Gr. 6 2023	Gr. 6 2022	Gr. 7 2023	Gr. 7 2022	Gr. 8 2023
Aileen Wright	88%	75%	100%	83%	69%	67%	71%	74%	80%	75%	92%	79%	55%	75%
BBS	100%	100%	80%	40%	80%	100%	90%	80%	67%	70%	80%	100%	20%	50%
ECCS	87%	68%	62%	75%	42%	43%	71%	75%	57%	60%	69%	50%	45%	73%
Holy Family	87%	73%	78%	100%	56%	69%	40%	79%	33%	23%	50%	29%	86%	75%
OICS									70%	66%	67%	56%	57%	66%
Pope Francis	89%	76%	86%	74%	71%	66%	77%	67%						
Sacred Heart					73%	68%	71%	62%	57%	55%	72%	55%	67%	55%
St. Anne	75%	78%	100%	94%	73%	54%	79%	71%	64%	63%	64%	48%	63%	63%
St. Jerome	92%	90%	77%	73%										
St. Joseph	90%	64%	80%	67%	76%	63%	93%	74%	73%	69%				
SPCO	88%	59%	100%	75%	76%	65%	93%	100%	73%	88%	91%	85%	86%	89%
SPKP	100%	88%	83%	64%	77%	72%	69%	80%	74%	70%	29%	23%	67%	58%
AVERAGE	90%	77%	85%	75%	69%	67%	75%	76%	65%	64%	68%	58%	60%	67%

11. **Agency Reports**

North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services

Youth Engagement – There are currently youth groups within the agency working on room decorations to make the space more relaxed and approachable. The groups choose the colors and the themes for the rooms. The rooms are being completed in the Englehart, New Liskeard, Cochrane, Iroquois Falls, Smooth Rock Falls and Hearst areas.

Signs of Safety® is a new way of working with families when concerns about a child's safety or well-being are brought to the attention of North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services (NEOFACS).

In September 2020, NEOFACS decided to move forward with adopting the Signs of Safety approach as its practice framework for all child welfare services.

We have a multi-year transformation plan designed to embed Signs of Safety. Staff are currently participating in learning modules to increase their knowledge of the approach and put it into practice.

Our Signs of Safety implementation journey will fundamentally change how our child welfare services will work with children, youth and families.

Our Practice Principles for Signs of Safety

NEOFACS will strive to embed the Signs of Safety practice principles for partnership throughout the Agency. These principles include:

- Children, youth and families are valued.
- All children, youth and families have strengths.
- Our focus is to promote the safety and well-being of children, youth and families.
- Focus on creating small changes.
- Treat all interactions as a forum for change.
- Learn what children, youth and families want.
- Offer choices.
- Always search for details
- Do not confuse case details with judgement.

12. **YMCA**
    New facility is currently being built at St. Joseph School with an anticipated opening date of September 2024. The location will offer daycare services for ages 0-12 and a Before and After School program.

13. **Other Business** – NA

14. **Adjournment**

    Moved By: S. Skalecki and E. Renaud
    That the meeting be adjourned at 12:30 p.m.
    CARRIED

NCDSB Board Math Action Plan 2023-2024

Math achievement efforts across the province should include multiple proven evidence- informed strategies and approaches to address local learning needs in schools.

The ministry has worked with researchers, math specialists, and school boards to identify three interwoven math actions to be prioritized in the 2023–24 school year. Board Math Leads, as they determine board and school priorities in mathematics achievement, will develop, implement, and monitor a Math Achievement Action Plan that includes meaningful and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with each of the priority actions below.

MATHEMATICS COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE: In order to promote effective math instruction, it is important for educators to foster mathematics communities in classrooms and schools, and to recognize that not all students learn math in the same way or within the same time frames. Effective math instruction is supported by an inclusive, positive, and safe learning environment where all students feel valued and engaged, and in which educators clearly communicate expectations and establish norms and routines with their students at the beginning of instruction. Educators at all levels of the school system have a role to play in establishing a culture of excellence in mathematics and setting conditions for success. This includes leaders reviewing practices to determine barriers to success, creating accountability, and attending to mathematics attitudes and mindsets in school and system improvement plans.

PRIORITY ACTION: Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation and use of instructional and assessment practices with a proven track record of enhancing student achievement.

Board Area of Need:

- ★ **Since the revisions have been made to the math curriculum, limited support has been provided to teachers to help with the fidelity of curriculum implementation. This is evidenced by the lack of alignment between report card grades and EQAO results for grade 3, 6 and 9.**
- Identify Key Concepts from FDK to Grade 9 that are worthy of review through regular retrieval practice in all strands.
- Build a shared, common understanding of the NCDSB Key Concepts with emphasis on number and spatial sense.
- Improve the understanding of the continuum of expectations in each strand from Gr. 1-9 and how the tools/resources we have access to support math instruction.
- Ensure all staff are using one of the core resources purchased for math instruction and an approved scope and sequence.
- Greater alignment between report card grades and EQAO results in math.

Guiding Questions:

- How are all educators throughout the system focused on developing a comprehensive understanding and precise implementation of the mathematics curriculum?
- How do grade, course, and daily lesson plans reflect the current curriculum, including the mathematical processes and connections between curriculum strands?

PRIORITY ACTION: Engaging in ongoing learning to strengthen mathematics content knowledge for teaching

Board Area of Need:

- ★ **EQAO strand data indicates that Spatial Sense is the greatest area of need in both grade 3 & 6 students. EQAO skills data indicates that both application and thinking are areas of need for both grade 3 & 6 students.**
- Improve the content knowledge of school leads and RTs in the area of number sense and numeration, specifically as it relates to the NCDSB Key Concepts and the Fundamentals of Mathematics, as well as on spatial sense so they can better support grade 3 & 6 teachers.
- Improve the content knowledge of FDK teachers in the areas of counting principles and spatial sense so that a strong number base is built in the early years.
- Build a shared, common understanding of the high impact practices of Direct Instruction and Deliberate Practice with Grade 3 & 6 teachers.
- Build a shared, common understanding of the connection between intermediate and secondary curriculum for new secondary math teachers.

Guiding Questions:

- What systems, supports, and resources are available to support teachers and leaders in determining a focus area for their math content knowledge development?
- How are all educators engaged in ongoing learning that strengthens their own mathematics knowledge, skills, and attitudes about math teaching and learning?

PRIORITY ACTION: Knowing the mathematics learner, and ensuring mathematical tasks, interventions and supports are relevant and responsive

Board Area of Need:

- ★ **IXL Data for grades 1-8 indicate that 67% of students are working below grade level in number sense and 63% of students are working below grade level in spatial sense.**
- ★ **Attendance data indicates that 54% of students have missed more than 10% of the school year.**
- Support classroom teachers from FDK to Grade 9 in using the NCDSB Key Concepts resource to develop and implement differentiated retrieval practice questions for their grade with emphasis on number and spatial sense.
- Students need to apply their knowledge and understanding of math concepts by completing problem solving activities regularly.
- Use of IXL (digital math tool) to support gap closing from Grade 1-9 using a diagnostic assessment and personalized learning plan loop. Align interventions with the data provided by the tool. Ensure students are working at least 2 days a week on spatial sense.
- Improve principal, lead and RT understanding of how to use data to plan, deliver and monitor gap-closing in math, particularly for students who are working well below grade level.
- Improve student attendance so that students are present for math learning.

Guiding Questions:

- How is student assessment data and prior mathematics knowledge used to guide interventions and planning?
- How do educators learn about the mathematics strengths, needs and interests of all students to inform their instructional decisions?
- How are educators supporting inclusion and engagement for all students, especially those with diverse learning needs?

Board-Level Strategies:

☑ Prioritize understanding of the curriculum and the continuum of learning across grades

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): Demonstrated increase in the number of teachers using core resources and a scope and sequence to teach math. A baseline will be collected in November.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Provide a copy of the curriculum continuums and key concepts to every math teacher, lead and RT from FDK-Gr. 8.

Have principals check in with each math teacher to determine what core program/resources are being used to deliver the curriculum from FDK-Gr. 8. Ensure alignment with board expectations. Baseline to be collected in November 2023 and then reviewed at the end of each term.

Ensure teachers are using a scope and sequence from FDK-Gr. 8. This could be the pathways from MathUp, the scope and sequence from Jump Math, or the board scope and sequence.

Leads to support classroom teachers in planning to ensure greater fidelity of the curriculum using the core resources from FDK-Gr. 9.

RTs to support classroom teachers in using the continuums of expectations to support math instruction and intervention from FDK-Gr. 9.

Board-Level Strategies:

☑ Utilize student achievement data and student work to establish focus areas for mathematics professional learning

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): Use of coaching logs to track the professional learning opportunities specifically provided. Is there evidence that the learning is being implemented in the classroom? Is there an impact on IXL data?**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Communicate why number sense and spatial sense are a focus for teacher learning through newsletters/email correspondence.

Create a PD plan for leads, RTs and principals that emphasizes the focus areas of number and spatial sense. Deliver the learning at monthly meetings.

Ensure leads are sharing their learning through a coaching model with Grade 3, 6 & 9 teachers.

Monitor impact of learning on student achievement through IXL data.

Board-Level Strategies:

☑ Provide a digital math tool to support student mathematics learning at home and/or at school, that can be used by teachers to understand current student learning levels and provide targeted supports for students

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): The % of students who demonstrate at least 12 months of gain in IXL over a 10 month period will improve by at least 10%.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

☑ Develop a system-wide attendance strategy for students with more than 10 days of absences as part of board's existing prolonged absence strategy

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): The percentage of students who attend school at least 90% of the time will improve by at least 10% at each school in 2023-2024.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Ensure all students are using IXL daily to gap close from Gr. 1-9. % of students with a pinpointed level will be at or above 95% in each school at all times. This indicates that students are working on a personalized learning plan that is up-to-date. Principals to monitor usage weekly.

Provide opportunity for teachers to work with David Costello to create questions for daily cumulative review that reflect the NCDSB Key Concepts for their grade using procedural, word and open ended problems.

Support principals in monitoring daily cumulative review and application of knowledge and understanding through problem solving.

Support principals and leads in monitoring growth in IXL monthly from Gr. 1-9. Students should be showing a minimum of 12-15 points growth each month. Support students who are not demonstrating growth through intervention.

Support leads and RTs in using the IXL data to support intervention from Gr. 1-9.

Provide resources to principals and school staff to support improved attendance. Ensure all staff are aware of the attendance protocol and connections with families are being made at designated time periods.

School-Level Strategies:

☑ Directly connect long-range plans, course outlines, lesson plans, and reporting to current curriculum expectations (e.g., educators consult the Curriculum and Resources website regularly to ensure alignment)

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): An increase in the number of teachers using Jump Math who indicate greater confidence in their ability to implement the curriculum with fidelity.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Provide a resource to teachers from FDK-Gr. 9 to improve their understanding of direct instruction and deliberate practice. Make the connection between resources/programs provided and these high impact strategies.

Ensure teachers in schools using Jump Math are feeling greater confidence in the implementation of the curriculum. Create a survey to be done in November, March and June. Provide additional learning as needed.

Support cross-panel sharing of best practices in math instruction. Support new math teachers who are teaching de-streamed classes.

School-Level Strategies:

☑ Engage in regular collaborative meetings (e.g., team teaching, collaborative analysis of student work, school and/or board networks, classroom visits) to deepen knowledge of mathematics, curriculum, instructional starting points, and interventions

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): Increase in the number of application and thinking questions that students are being asked to complete as observed in student work samples.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Provide an opportunity for staff to work with David Costello to improve their understanding of the types of math problems - procedural, word and open-ended tasks as part of daily cumulative review.

Ensure teachers are providing weekly opportunities for students to solve problems as part of daily cumulative review. Use of a notebook to collect samples for each student is recommended.

Provide an opportunity for principals to work with David Costello to develop a mechanism to monitor daily cumulative review.

Collect samples of summative assessments from Grade 1-9 to monitor the use of application and thinking questions. Plan learning opportunities for staff based on this sampling.

School-Level Strategies:

☑ Determine key content areas, informed by EQAO data, including Strands and Skills reports, to determine where students may be struggling most and if there are gaps between classroom and EQAO achievement

- ★ **EQAO strand data indicates that Spatial Sense is the greatest area of need in both grade 3 & 6 students. EQAO skills data indicates that both application and thinking are areas of need for both grade 3 & 6 students. There is also a significant gap between classroom and EQAO achievement as evidenced in Report Card Data.**
- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): The number of students who are working below grade level in IXL in number and spatial sense will improve by at least 15% over the 2023-2024 school year.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Monitor students in IXL to ensure they are working on both number and spatial sense activities in their personalized learning plan weekly.

Support principals and leads in monitoring improvement in number and spatial sense in IXL each term. We need to see consistent growth in the number of students working at grade level in number and spatial sense.

Collect summative assessment examples from Gr. 1-9. Have principals moderate these to determine alignment to the categories of the achievement chart.

Monitor the alignment between report card data and EQAO achievement. Develop a plan to support teachers with assessment practices in math.

Classroom-Level Strategies:

☑ Connect instruction and assessment to curriculum expectations and long-term essential mathematical understandings using developmental continuums

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): Report card comments for marker students in Gr. 1-9 contain reference to all strands each term. Comments indicate staff have a good understanding of essential mathematical concepts.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Ensure teachers have an assessment plan that will allow for each strand to be covered each term. Report card comments need to reflect this.

Provide quality report card sample comments to teachers as a model.

Improve teacher understanding of how to calculate a report card grade that is reflective of all categories of the achievement chart.

Collect report card comment samples from each class from Gr. 1-8 using marker students (below, at and above grade level). Develop success criteria for good comments. Support principals in moderating these to determine the degree to which comments meet the success criteria. Use this information to support teachers in creating better comments for the next term.

Classroom-Level Strategies:

☑ Access resources (e.g., teacher supports on the Curriculum and Resources website), experts (e.g., curriculum consultant, school math facilitator), and professional learning to continuously develop content knowledge for teaching

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): Increase in the number of Year 2 FDK students who are working at grade level on the NCDSB All About Number assessment. Baseline to be collected in Fall of 2023.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Complete the NCDSB All About Number assessment on all Year 2 FDK students 3 times a year. Include the spatial sense diagnostic activity.

Plan and deliver PD to FDK teachers on counting principles and the development of spatial sense in early learners.

Ensure teachers in the early years are working with the appropriate numbers when teaching number sense.

Support principals in understanding how to monitor quality number and spatial sense instruction in early primary.

Classroom-Level Strategies:

☑ Monitor and re-engage students at the earliest sign that attendance is impacting learning (e.g., at 3 days and 6 days of absence) and implement board's 10-day and prolonged absence strategy

- ★ **Key Performance Indicator(s): # of contacts made by teachers with parents of students who have been absent at 3 and 6 days; # of contacts with parents by principals as part of the 10-day and prolonged absence strategy.**
- ★ **Progress Report: N/A for this report**

Action Items:

Provide a copy of the Attendance Concern Intervention Process to all teachers. Ensure staff are aware of their role in the process. Support principals in monitoring teacher-parent contact regarding attendance (less than 10 days absence).

Support principals in monitoring attendance for students who have more than 10 days absence as part of the prolonged absence strategy.

Communicate with parents about attendance at each reporting period. Provide a consistent message about the importance of regular attendance through postcards, newsletters and an improved presence on the board website.