

# Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

11:45 p.m. Northeastern Catholic District School Board

## MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Kristine Arthur, Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services  
Tara Ruel, Timmins Learning Centre  
Ellen Renaud, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services  
Mackenzie Carrier, YMCA  
Paula Crotteau, Cochrane Temiskaming Children's Treatment Centre  
Shannon Costello, The Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board  
Ryley Reis, Canadian Mental Health Association  
Colleen Landers, NCDSB Trustee  
Stan Skalecki, NCDSB Trustee  
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education  
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher  
Katie Mundle, Special Assignment Teacher  
Amber Smith-Come, School Principal St. Anne School  
Kim McEntee, Mental Health Supervisor  
Lisa Lamarche, Behavior & Autism Worker  
Jean Ethier, Education Services Officer / Recorder

**EXCUSED:** Billie Richer, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children  
Julia Spadetto-Forward, School Principal St. Jerome School  
Melanie Hannah, Misiway Milopemahtesewin Community Health Centre  
Sabrina Belanger, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre

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: Mackenzie Carrier SECONDED

THAT the agenda be approved as presented

CARRIED.

3. **Approval of the Minutes**

MOVED BY: Shannon Costello

BY: Kristine Arthur SECONDED

THAT the minutes be approved as presented

CARRIED.

#### 4. Learning Recovery Plans

##### 4.1 Tutors in the Classroom

This position has been provided to ensure there is additional supports in each elementary school. The focus of the work will be on ensuring students from K-Gr. 3 have consistent opportunities to practice the skills in literacy and numeracy that have been highlighted as needing work. We will also focus specifically on Reading Fluency with Grade 6-8 students. The tutors will work with small groups, and at times, individual students on a sequence of activities. Every school can hire at least 2 tutors.

- Will work from April 29th to June 14th; 5.5 hours a day (this includes 30 minutes of help over the lunch hour)
- Breaks are to be taken during recess to maximize time to tutor
- We will not be extending the time beyond June 14th
- To use the materials created last year to provide short burst of intervention on a specific skill
- Pre/Post assessments must take place; progress monitoring would also be required for any support that extends beyond 2 weeks. This does not have to be in AimsWeb, but some form of keeping track of progress.
- Tutors are expected to have a full schedule created with the support of the lead/RTs
- This is not intended to be extra support in classrooms; they are not to be assigned to a classroom but rather to work directly with specific students on a specific skill or set of skills.
- Tutors are not to be used to provide accommodations during EQAO
- Tutors are not to be used to provide OT, EA and ECE coverage under any circumstance. If you want an OT, hire them into this casual role and not into the position of tutor.

##### 4.2 OFIP Tutoring

This position has been provided to ensure there is additional supports in each elementary school that has to administer EQAO. The focus of the work will be on ensuring students from Gr. 3 & 6 understand the importance of carefully answering digital questions. Using Lexia and IXL as the practice platforms, OFIP tutors will spend time with all grade 3 & 6 students in a school to discuss and practice strategies to answer digital questions. Our goal is to avoid having any students clicking through reading, writing and math questions on EQAO. Where appropriate, additional instructional support may be provided in math to support gap closing using IXL as the tool.

- Will work between April 8th and May 31st; time should not extend beyond the beginning of EQAO in your school.
- **All sessions will take place at lunch, so in 30-minute blocks.** This will ensure that all students can participate.
- All grade 3 & 6 students should receive at least 2 sessions (one for reading and one for math), but those in greater need would be a priority for additional supports.
- It is suggested that we work with groups of no more than about 5 at a time.

##### 4.3 Summer Learning/Transition Program

- **Summer Learning - July.** There are funds available for at least 2 programs across the district. A minimum of 20 learners would be required for any given location. Principals have been asked to connect with Daphne if they are interested in helping to organize a program for your school/region.
- **Summer Transition Program - August.** There are funds available for all schools to run a 4-day program the week before school starts as we have been. This year, that would be August 21st for staff and August 22, 23, 26 and 27 for students. Schools with large populations of students with ASD could look to offer two groups if needed. If you have interest for more than one group, that is also a possibility.

- **School Readiness Program - Spring** - funds could be made available for this, but it will not be organized centrally. If you want to run a program for your new year 1 learners, principals have been asked to speak to Daphne.

**5. Enrolment for September 2024 – Kindergarten Registrations**

School	English program	French Immersion	Total
AWCH	8	0	8
BBMO	1	0	1
ECCS	17	0	17
HFEN	5	0	5
PFES	15	29	44
SAIF	3	6	9
SJKL	18	18	36
SJTM	4	0	4
SPCO	8	0	8
SPKP	1	0	1
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>133</b>

**6. October 31<sup>st</sup> Data**

Daphne reviewed the Special Education data from October with the group. The RTs are currently in the process of updating this data for March 31<sup>st</sup>, as required.

**7. Review of Special Education Plan for 2024-2025**

See pages 6-8 of the minutes for a list of Action Items.

**8. Agency Reports**

**Canadian Mental Health Association**

The association is experiencing delays in provide services to families due to a decrease in staff. Services are provided to individuals 16 and over and to parents who may require support. There are currently 1600-1700 clients accessing the services of CMHA.

**Timmins Learning Centre**

The Timmins Learning Center is a non-profit organization focusing on the quality of services being offered as opposed to quantity. This model allows providing the best services possible to the community.

**The Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board**

Additional funding was received for mental health supports for the EarlyON program and being utilized internally to provide free services to families. Including an art program for children under 6 and a caffeine and conservation program with the support of Clarity Counselling. The EarlyOn program has seen come significant changes over the last couple of months with the focus on literacy and numeracy. Funding for the next fiscal year has not been finalized for the childcare program and the agency is in the processing of completing a special needs resourcing review and scope of practice review. One on one

support is not provided until the individual reaches a certain tier level. The staff are not pulling children out to work on anything; this results in a more inclusive practice.

### **Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services**

The agency is experiencing a change in senior management and the positions should be filled by mid-April.

In the Prevention Dept. the focus is about making services more accessible to the general public who are not involved with protection. Bringing more awareness for our community partners, for our schools and our families about what services are available and easily accessible through a quick referral and then a home visit versus all the steps that people are currently to do. The agency is focusing on Jordans Principle applications as they can take five to six months to be processed. For students who already know we're going to require a services, speech and language assessments, any of those types of things, it would be best to kind of contact our team to get those referrals kind of going for next year just to make sure services are in place for those students in September. There will be one or two key contacts within the agency to reach out to regarding Jordans Principle applications.

### **Cochrane Children's Treatment Centre**

The agency is currently preparing for our JK transitions. All of our preschool speech and language students that are transitioning into school, so we're preparing for assessments and transition plans and will be in touch with the board to identify those multiple needs. For children that will be coming into school in September we are currently fully underway with our pilot of transition to tier-based intervention in school-based rehabilitation. This has started in portions of the South region and in the far North region, we continue to transition with our plan for full transition with occupational therapy in the fall of 2024. Physiotherapy and speech and language pathology transition will occur within the next school years.

### **North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services**

The agency is seeing an increase in ASD clients and multiple children in the same family receiving the same diagnosis. Staffing Social Workers in the Kapuskasing and Hearst area has been challenging and delays providing services to those in the area. The agency will also be holding events for Mental Health Week and Ellen will share once it has been finalized.

Mental health programs just finished our accreditation programs, so they now accredited again for another four years. This means they have met the accreditation standards, which demonstrates that they are not just meeting the ministry levels that they meeting the accreditation levels. There has been an increase in residential live-in programs requiring extra beds to be added for those identified very high-risk youth in needs. A youth transition home will be opening where the youth can live in their individual unit and be supported by the house parents living onsite.

9. **Date of Next Meeting:** April 17, 2024 at 11:45 a.m.

10. **Other Business:** Update for Kim McEntee Mental Health Supervisor

Mental Health Week will take place from May 6-10, 2024 the theme is 5 Ways to Well Being, Dr. Adele Lafrance will be speaking on May 8, 2024 with an emotion focused family therapy approach. Kim will be sharing the speakers date and times once they are finalized.

The NCDSB Well-being team along with 20 community partners hosted a Youth Health & Wellness Fair on March 6 for Grades 9-12 O'Gorman High School & O'Gorman Intermediate Grade 8 students. The students engage in conversations with the community agencies. The fair is designed to inform students of services provided to them and become comfortable accessing a service.

**11. Adjournment**

Moved By: Mackenzie Carrier

That the meeting be adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

CARRIED

## Special Education Plan Action Items & Update 2023-2024

Action Item & Page	Update
<p>ACTION 1 for 2023-2024 - Continue to work on the creation of the documents that outline the various internal processes found in the special education department. p. 2</p>	<p>No additional processes have been created - waiting to review those created last year.</p>
<p>ACTION 2 for 2023-2024 - It is our desire to include students in the IPRC and IEP process where appropriate (Grade 7 &amp; up). We would like to continue to have schools work towards this expectation and have them support students in developing a one page document highlighting their strengths, needs, key accommodations and unique learning profile. This document will be shared with those staff currently supporting the student, as well as those who will be supporting the student the following year. p.9</p>	<p>Schools continue to include students in the IEP/ IPRC process where appropriate.</p> <p>We have not yet shared information about the 1 page document with schools.</p>
<p>ACTION 3 for 2023-2024 - Continue to build capacity and competency of principals, teachers and support staff in the development, implementation and monitoring of effective IEPs for students requiring modifications to individual programs. Each school worked through an IEP audit process in the winter of 2022. We would like to engage school teams in a follow-up process in the fall of 2023 to continue to build comfort with this in each school. Ensure all new teachers hired who have not previously done the NCDSB IEP e-Hub course, complete this by the end of September 2023. p.11</p>	<p>IEP Review held in December 2023/January 2024 with Principals and RTs.</p> <p>New hires are added to the IEP eHUB course as their names are shared with Katie and Catherine.</p>
<p>ACTION 4 for 2023-2024 - Literacy/Numeracy Leads have been added to the staffing complement of <b>9 of our 10</b> elementary schools that have children in FDK to Grade 3. These new staff members will serve as a champion of the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy, will support the implementation of the new math curriculum and will work directly with students who require extra support in these areas to lessen the likelihood that gaps in learning will occur. The Special Education department will work closely with this team of teachers to provide professional learning opportunities and to monitor student achievement. We expect to focus on consolidating understanding of phonics instruction and begin to explore how best to support writing instruction. p. 12</p>	<p>Resource Teachers, Katie and Catherine have worked closely with the Leads and Daphne to deepen our understanding of the science of reading. We meet monthly and have supported 2 full days of in person learning. The resource Next Steps in Literacy Instruction was purchased and shared with everyone. We continue to examine our collected Aimsweb data, the role of fluency and ways to track intervention growth through progress monitoring.</p>
<p>ACTION 5 for 2023-2024 - Ensure parents are aware of our SEAC membership and dates for our monthly meetings through posting of information on the board website by September 30th, 2023 Minutes of SEAC meetings will also be posted on a monthly basis. We will continue to explore additional community representatives on SEAC. In particular we are looking for representatives with connections to the ASD and LD communities. p. 30</p>	<p>SEAC dates for the year and minutes are posted online <a href="https://www.ncdsb.on.ca/seac.php">https://www.ncdsb.on.ca/seac.php</a></p>

<p>ACTION 6 for 2023-2024 - Review and revise the Early and On-Going Identification section of the NCDSB Special Education Plan to ensure it aligns with the recommendations of the Right to Read Inquiry Report and with current practice in literacy and numeracy instruction. p. 38</p>	<p>This will need to be addressed.</p>
<p>ACTION 7 for 2023-2024 - Finalize the 5-year implementation plan for the Science of Reading/Structure Literacy approach. Our focus for 2023-2024 will be on the consolidation of understanding of Phonological Awareness and Phonics instruction. We expect to add fluency work and writing to build teacher capacity. p.42</p>	<p>There is a focus group working on writing with Bev to pilot a writing program from Australia. Much work and professional learning has been done with the leads and RT group around fluency. Katie and Catherine completed a PD session with EAs regarding fluency. Many resources have been collected and shared with teachers.</p> <p>We will need to finalize our 5-year plan.</p>
<p>ACTION 8 for 2023-2024 - Review the use of the Brigance Early Screening tool to determine how it might best be used to provide additional information about developmental functioning of students identified as at-risk through other assessment protocols. p.43</p>	<p>Discussion to be had with Katie/Catherine about this before the end of March to see what place this tool might have in our screening/assessment protocol.</p>
<p>ACTION 9 for 2023-2024 - Review and revise the Early Identification Process. p. 45</p>	<p>This will need to be addressed.</p>
<p>ACTION 10 for 2023-2024 - Review and revise the Intervention for Students At-Risk section of this plan. It must reflect the Right to Read Recommendation and our current practice. p.47</p>	<p>This will need to be addressed.</p>
<p>ACTION 11 for 2023-2024 - Support and monitor the use of IXL in Grades 2-9 as a mechanism to close gaps in math skills. Regular use of the diagnostic arena and the student personalized learning plan is expected for all students. We are aiming for 15-20 minutes of use of this program 3 times a week. p.48</p>	<p>This is the second year of IXL for Math, Megan has been contacted by most principals to provide support to new teachers in IXL. Often leads are supporting teachers as well. Daphne has reminded teachers to have students access the arena every week to complete 30 questions. Students have been told to do 15 minutes a day to practice. Teachers are expected to pull small groups to guide them through trouble spots to close gaps.</p>
<p>ACTION 12 for 2023-2024 - Continue to support schools in implementing the School-Based Team model. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for school staff to discuss the needs of students by sharing ideas about how to better support the student, and collaborate to create an action plan to support the student moving forward. A follow up is required to ensure that actions have been taken and to discuss their effectiveness. Special Assignment Teachers for Special Education may need to provide side-by-side coaching to support teams in maximizing this structure/protocol. p.49</p>	<p>We will need to follow up with each school to see how this process is unfolding and how we can better support things. This process is a non-negotiable, but has challenges related to releasing staff to meet.</p>
<p>ACTION 13 for 2023-2024 - Explore a variety of screening</p>	<p>This needs to be finalized. IDEAPEL is</p>

<p>tools that could be used in early primary French Immersion classrooms to support the recommendations of the Right to Read Inquiry Report. Ideally we would find something that provides norm-referenced results and allows for easy collection of data at a board level. p.52</p>	<p>essentially DIBELS in french and the only tool available in french. We need a plan to try things in June in order to prepare for full implementation in the fall.</p>
<p>ACTION 14 for 2023-2024 - Work with our secondary school to determine how best to support the large number of students with diagnosed learning disabilities (nearly 25% of the student population). Review the use of LD Class Profiles as one mechanism to support students in destreamed and streamed classes. Build capacity with classroom teachers to better understand how to support students with an LD in the classroom. p.60</p>	<p>Given that there are 2 new RTs at OHS, and the staffing shortage, the focus for the remainder of this school year will be to work with the RTs to ensure that they have a solid understanding of the LD category of exceptionality and to build their professional learning around the domains of cognition, so that they are ready to support the classroom teachers in the fall.</p>