

AGENDA

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, September 25, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Boardroom, Catholic Education Centre

Mission: *Disciples of Christ, nurturing mind, body, and soul to the fullness of life.*

Vision: *Changing the world through Catholic education.*

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B. Presentations and Staff Reports

1. Introduction From Organization Members: Superintendent L. Papaloni
2. Summer Program Updates: L. Pincente, Coordinator, Special Education
3. Parents Reaching Out Grant Updates: E. Moniz-Baptista, J. Toste, Consultants, Special Education
4. Uplifting Significant Dates: K. Cordi, Consultant, Special Education

C. Budget

D. Reports from Trustees for Receipt

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I. Future Meetings

October 16, 2024

November 20, 2024

December 11, 2024

January 22, 2025

February 19, 2025

March 19, 2025

April 23, 2025

May 21, 2025

June 11, 2025

J. Adjournment



OPENING PRAYER

God of compassion,
You created us for community.
Gather us together in Your embrace
And give us the grace to support one
another and to go always in peace.
Guide us in our discernment.
Help us to separate true faith from illusion
And grant us wisdom and understanding.
Amen

Land Acknowledgement

We are here to pay respect and recognize that this is the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations, and we are here because this land was occupied. In recognizing that this space occupies colonized First Nations territories, and out of respect for the rights of Indigenous people, it is our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories and present-day implications and honour, protect and sustain this land.

SEPTEMBER 30TH

NATIONAL DAY FOR

**TRUTH AND
RECONCILIATION**



MINUTES

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

**Wednesday, June 12, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Boardroom, Catholic Education Centre**

Attendees:	Bruno Iannicca	Trustee - Chair
	Heather Bialowas	Down Syndrome Assoc. of Peel: Caring Network - Representative
	Airene Cunanan	Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter - Alternative
	Myra Del Rosario	ABC Association for Bright Children - Representative
	Liza Dowson	Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders - Representative
	Caroline Huxtable	Epilepsy South Central Ontario - Representative
	Lisa Papaloni	Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region - Representative
	Laurie-Anne Clark	Member at Large, Central Committee for Catholic School Councils
	Paula Dametto-Giovannozzi	Alternate Trustee
Regrets:	Dely Farrace	Brampton Caledon Community Living - Vice Chair - Representative
	Luz del Rosario	Alternate Chair
	Thomas Thomas	Alternate Trustee
	Janice Hatton	Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter - Representative
	Christine Koczmar	Community Living Mississauga - Representative
	Debbie Hammond	Dufferin-Peel Educational Resource Workers' Association - Representative
	Shanna Walsh	Down Syndrome Assoc. of Peel: Caring Network - Alternative
	Pam Boniferno	Dufferin-Peel Educational Resource Workers' Association - Alternative
	Andrea Isaac	OECTA Elementary - Alternative
Staff:	Lucy Papaloni	Superintendent, Special Education and Learning Services
	Sabrina Baiana	Coordinator, Diverse Learning Needs
	Tammie Cameron	Consultant, Diverse Learning Needs
	Sharon Chambers	Principal, Vice Principal Association, Elementary
	Joanne Dean	Chief, Speech/Language/Hearing/Vision
	Pina Grosso	Chief of Social Work
	Christiane Kyte	General Manager, Clinical Services and Spec Education
	Laura Pincen	Coordinator, Secondary Transitions and Diverse Learners
	Jacqueline Toste	Consultant, Diverse Learning Needs
	Laura Odo	Superintendent representative
	Kristie Boily	Consultant, Special Education and Learning Services
	Alexandra Lawrence	Coordinator, Special Education and Learning Services
	Katherine Magee	Executive Assistant, Special Education and Learning Services - Recorder

A. Routine Matters

1. Call to Order and Attendance

Chair of SEAC, Bruno Iannicca, called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

2. Liturgy
3. Land Acknowledgment - Superintendent Papaloni
4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Heather Bialowas

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, May 15th, 2024

Moved by Myra Del Rosario

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING, May 15, 2024, BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

6. Previous Business - Nil

B. Presentations and Staff Reports

1. PROGrant Employment Supports Fair Update: T. Abbruscato

Superintendent Papaloni introduced T. Abbruscato, Consultant, Special Education. T. Abbruscato provided a follow-up report on the events of the Parent Reaching Out Grant Employment Supports Fair. Students and families had the opportunity to engage with employment support agencies. Experiential Learning opportunities were explained to the attendees. Additional resources were provided. She explained the purpose of the Transition Advisory Committee and their assistance in the facilitation of Central Resource Fairs.

M. Del Rosario asked which students were invited to attend this fair. T. Abbruscato answered that the flyer was sent to all secondary schools and their families. Any student with an IEP was invited to attend. Lisa Papaloni asked if the employment fair is just for summer employment. T. Abbruscato answered that each agency offered a different service. Some were for post-secondary employment, while others were for summer employment. Trustee Bruno Iannicca asked if there are lunch room monitor programs. T. Abbruscato stated that this can be looked into. A. Cunanan asked if these fairs will be offered next year. T. Abbruscato answered that yes, this will be offered again next year.

2. Summer Cooperative Learning: L. Pincente

Superintendent Papaloni introduced L. Pincente, Coordinator, Special Education to present the Summer Cooperative Learning Program. L. Pincente stated that this year the Ministry of Education has offered a small grant to support students with disabilities to pursue cooperative credit in placement opportunities. These funds will provide individualized supports to students during in-class days and work placements.

Lisa Papaloni asked if the students get support with placements or do they have to find the placements themselves. L. Pincente answered that they have all already been introduced to their support staff and they have been assigned their placements. C. Huxtable asked when the process started and how many students are in each area of Mississauga and Brampton. L. Pincente answered that they wanted to have equity for both areas and students were selected based on interest. There are approximately 15 students currently participating. C. Huxtable asked to receive feedback in September. L. Pincente answered that, yes, this will be the next phase of the project.

3. Family of Schools Highlights: A. Lawrence, S. Baiana, L. Pincente

Superintendent Papaloni introduced S. Baiana, L. Pincente and A. Lawrence to present the Family of Schools Highlights. S. Baiana showed a video of students and their achievements throughout the year. One of the highlights is a graduated Dufferin-Peel student who is currently a hallway monitor at a high school. L. Pincente presented a video of students from a Planning for Independence class and Secondary Communications class leading a group in prayer.

Trustee Bruno Iannicca stated that these are the great things that Dufferin-Peel CDSB does and he is very impressed.

C. Budget

Trustee Bruno Iannicca mentioned that the questions that were asked during the budget meeting of April 24th are now available online.

Lisa Papaloni asked what is meant by online. Trustee Bruno Iannicca answered that it is on the board website under Budget.

D. Reports from Trustees for Receipt

Trustee Bruno Iannicca discussed the need to use one bank for all of the schools to reduce bank charges. He mentioned that the LED signs that are going up at all of the schools are still in progress. Trustee Bruno Iannicca explained the funding formula for transportation that will decrease the number of students who walk to school. This will mean that 8,000 extra children will be bussed and this will lead to increased costs. This will also increase the current shortage of bus drivers. He mentioned that there is \$345 million in outstanding maintenance issues over the next five years. He mentioned the approval for the replacement of St. Anne Catholic Elementary School in Brampton

and a new school, Mount Pleasant #2. Both will be opening in September 2025. Portables at St. Mary Fix Elementary School will be fixed in July. The Chipmunk application pilot is finished and will be finalized this summer. Trustee Bruno Iannicca also mentioned a prom that he attended for children who learn differently. He found it very inspiring and enjoyed seeing how happy everyone was.

E. Information/Reports from Community Associations - Nil

F. Information and Correspondence

1. Letter from PAAC to All Special Education Advisory Committees: L. Papaloni
Superintendent Papaloni presented the letter from PAAC to the SEAC committees.
2. SEAC Members Handbook: L. Pincente, S. Baiana
Superintendent Papaloni introduced S. Baiana, Coordinator, Special Education and Learning Services. S. Baiana asked the committee members for volunteers to provide input and assist with writing the members' handbook. Please email Katherine if interested.

Lisa Papaloni asked how much time commitment this would take and if it would be during the day or evening. S. Baiana answered that it would be about an hour or two and it would be during the day.

G. Communication - Nil

H. Questions Asked by Committee Members

Lisa Papaloni requested to follow up with the Five Year Strategic Plan with another question for Superintendent Vecchiarino. She asked who gets to review this plan. This committee should have an opportunity to review it to help represent the children with special needs. Bruno Trustee Iannicca answered that he will ask Superintendent Vecchiarino when SEAC members have the opportunity to review it. He will ask during Tuesday's Board meeting. The response will be forwarded to SEAC.

C. Huxtable asked where the school board is in terms of social media usage rules. Trustee Bruno Iannicca mentioned that there are challenges and issues with this. They are being addressed and a policy will be implemented.

L. Dowson mentioned the death of a student in Ontario while in a sensory room. She asked what Dufferin-Peel's policy is for sensory rooms? Superintendent Papaloni answered that this school board does not have defined sensory rooms. There are rooms where the students can go with an occupational therapist or social worker to do work or therapy. Children are not alone. There is always an adult present with the child. L. Dowson asked about seclusion rooms where a child can go if they need quiet. Superintendent Papaloni answered there are no seclusion rooms. If a child needs some space, they can go for a walk down the hallway or to the library with an adult. L. Dowson asked if restraints are used in schools. Superintendent Papaloni answered that restraints are only used as an absolute last resort intervention strategy if a child is self-harming or dangerous to other students. The staff are well-trained in non-violent crisis intervention strategies to help prevent this last resort.

I. Future Meetings

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June 11, 2025

CARRIED

J. Adjournment

Moved by H. Bialowas.

THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 8:13 P.M.

CARRIED



Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

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June 13, 2024

The Honourable Todd Smith
Ministry of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

Dear Minister Todd Smith:

I am writing to you today to express a pressing concern regarding the need for increased funding to support students with complex needs in our educational system. While the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board's (BGCDSB) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) acknowledges the increases to Special Education spending for the 2023-24 school year; we are concerned that the increases do not adequately meet the funding that is required to support students with increasingly complex special education needs.

At BGCDSB, we believe in inclusive education and have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that adequate resources can have on the academic and personal development of these students. Students with complex needs often require specialized instruction, individualized support, and access to a range of services to thrive in a mainstream educational environment. These services include, but are not limited to, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, psychological support, and specialized instructional materials. The demand for such resources is growing, yet the current funding levels are insufficient to meet the needs of these students effectively.

As a school board, our special education workers report increased numbers of students with complex needs, especially in our primary grades. However, we are unable to increase spending on classroom supports such as Educational Assistants, professional development for teachers, and modifications to physical spaces to create more inclusive environments for these students. We believe this situation is not unique to BGCDSB. Many of our students with complex needs include those who have a comorbidity with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Studies from both Canadian and American sources indicate an increase in the prevalence of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In 2008, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported an ASD prevalence rate of approximately 1 in 88 children. In 2019, the Canadian health survey on children and youth reported an ASD prevalence rate of 1 in 50 children. The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a news release in 2023 reporting the prevalence of ASD had risen to 1 in 36 children. The report "underscores the considerable need for equitable and accessible screening, services, and support for all children".

Supporting students with complex needs is not just a matter of equity; it is a fundamental component of a just and inclusive society. By investing in these students, we are investing in a future where all individuals can reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to our communities.

I urge you to consider the critical need for increased funding for special education services and to take the necessary steps to ensure that all students, regardless of their needs, receive the support and resources they need and deserve to thrive. Your leadership and commitment to this cause can make a significant difference in the lives of countless students and their families. We look forward to learning how the Ministry will follow up to provide special education funding that addresses the increasing complexities of student needs in our school systems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Grey".

On behalf of the SEAC Chair
Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board