



Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting held on April 4, 2023

Present

- Kerry Desjardins - Superintendent of Education
- Judy Wawia (Chair) - Trustee - First Nation Representative
- Andrea Stach - George Jeffrey Children's Centre, Thunder Bay
- Lisa Copp - Educational Assistant Representative
- Danielle Bond - Parent
- Shirley Jean - Trustee
- Lindsay Costa - Principal Representative
- Fred Schmidt - Associate Director - Children's Centre, Thunder Bay
- Jennifer Moore - DILICO
- Bobbi-Lin Mercer - Teacher Representative
- Brie-Ann Copp - Parent
- Tracy Bryson - Presenter
- Dawna Harrison - Recorder

Regrets

- Maureen Parkes - FASD Coordinator, NW Community Health Centre

Welcome and Opening Liturgy:

Judy Wawia began the meeting with a prayer and Shirley Jean read the statement of acknowledgement.

Agenda/Minutes:

Resolution #22/22

Moved By: Shirley Jean
Seconded By: Bobbi-Lin Mercer

THAT the agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on April 4, 2023 be accepted.

Carried.

Resolution #23/22

Moved By: Danielle Bond
Seconded By: Lisa Copp

THAT the [minutes](#) of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on March 7, 2023 be accepted.

Carried.

Business Arising Out of Minutes

Professional Learning Update

1. [Autism Awareness](#) - Autism Acceptance Day/Month (April 2023)

Autism Awareness Day was Sunday, April 2nd. Many schools celebrated Monday, April 3rd by wearing blue.

Four SNCDSB staff are currently registered in the Registered Behavioural Technician course. Several Educational Assistants and Teachers, even some Principals are taking part in a variety of Sonderly courses to learn more about autism and how to support and engage students.

Bobbi-Lin Mercer asked about professional development for students with Down Syndrome.

Brie-Ann Copp shared that St. Edward School is taking part in an Autism Acceptance Awareness Week by participating in events they planned.

[Amazing Things Happen](#) - Raising awareness and understanding for future Generations

This video is great to share with children to help them understand Autism and neurodiversity.

New Business

1. **Mental Health Update - Tracy Bryson**

Significant work is being done for Behavioural Management Systems, which addresses behaviour in positive ways. Educators are becoming more involved in training in Autism awareness. More in depth courses would be beneficial. Supply

Educational Assistants are able to take the Behavioural Management Systems courses.

Drug Free Kids Canada Webinar - lack of coverage prevented staff from attending but the session was recorded and is available to anyone wishing to

Children's Centre Thunder Bay - there have been fifty-one referrals since the beginning of our partnership with Children's Centre Thunder Bay, thirty-two of those have been from this year.

Dilico has also offered significant support.

May 1st-7th is Mental Health Week. This year's theme is 'Share Your Story.' Preparation is underway and we thank our community partners.

Noojimo is a virtual Health Clinic that is assisting us in meeting urgent needs while wait lists remain high elsewhere. In order to qualify for services, someone in the household has to have Indigenous ancestry. This program currently exists in one of our schools for grades 5-8 but can be developed to incorporate any age group.

2. [Right to Read Report](#) Update

- **Early Screening Assessment**
- **Heggerty**
- **Lexia**

Our Board is working on ensuring we have the proper programs in place to meet the Ministry's mandate for students' reading level. Teachers are learning about the science of reading. Grades K-1 students were screened to target students that need additional intervention. The screening will be done again in June to see if these students moved forward, as well as to determine the next steps for the teachers. This will ensure that we give teachers the supports needed to move forward.

Heggerty is a 10 min whole-group resource tool used in grade K-2 classrooms, up to grade 3 in some schools. It helps close gaps that developed as a result of the Covid Pandemic. Implementation has begun and it is being used in most schools. Development will continue over several years.

Bridge the Gap is a Learning For All resource offered through Heggerty. It has been purchased for all Learning for All teachers to use for students in grades 4 and up.

The Lexia Learning K-8 model is being used across the Board, in all schools and offers specific targeted intervention for students and small groups. We are

moving forward with targeted Professional Development for educators, specific to grade. The next steps will be developed for the next school year.

3. **Summer Learning & Special Education Summer Services**

The program will continue this year. Summer learning position postings have gone out to staff. Registration will be available online within a couple of weeks.

Tiny Eye has also offered their virtual sessions again this year. 5 students will be continuing with the program this summer.

4. **Early Development Instrument (EDI)**

The Early Development Instrument has just been released by the Ministry. It is a screening that will be done for every SK student across the province, focussing on 5 domains that are measured within the survey, totalling 103 questions.

Kindergarten Teachers will receive training and they will participate in the questionnaire for every student. The results will help to determine how to better support students and families.

5. **EQAO 2022-2023**

- [EQAO Resources for primary-](#) and [junior-division](#) assessments
- [EQAO Webinar for parents and guardians](#)

This is an EQAO year. All testing will be done online. Resources have been shared to support readiness skills that will be used to participate in the testing. All schools have a window of May 10-June 14 to complete the assessment.

6. **Correspondence Received:**

[Near North DSB Letter](#) - to be discussed at our next meeting.

7. **Service Provider Updates (if available):**

- George Jeffrey Children's Centre - Andrea Stach

The *Entry to School Program* launched its third cohort and has expanded from having two to four children to six children. The learners are doing very well and progressing amazingly.

An OCT Assistant has been hired and is currently completing training with hopes of traveling soon. A Speech Language Pathologist has also been hired. They will be performing community based work in Thunder Bay, as well as Greenstone and Armstrong.

- Children's Centre Thunder Bay - Fred Schmidt

Mostly Status quo.

The *Live In Treatment Program* (LIT), an intensive service program, has gone through an enhancement. The program has enhanced their pre and post treatment, with services and invention now being done prior as well as follow up being done afterwards. The program is to the district as well.

- Norwest Community Health Centre - Maureen Parkes

Unable to attend.

- Dilico Anishinabek Family Care - Jennifer Moore

Struggle is still real in the process and ability to recruit staff. Dilico is preparing for the annual Dare to Dream event on Tuesday, May 2nd.

Future Agenda Items

1. [Near North DSB Letter](#)

Other Matters

1. **Next Meeting Date:** May 2, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. via zoom

Adjournment

Resolution #24/22

Moved By: Fred Schmidt
 Seconded By: Brie-Ann Copp

THAT we adjourn the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Carried.

Originally signed by

SEAC Chairperson

Date

Originally signed by

SEAC Member

Date