

AGENDA

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

CEC - Boardroom

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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2. Census Data: K. Russell-Kwan
3. PRO Grant Update - Employment Supports Fair: C. D'Souza, L. Pincente

C. Budget

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October 18, 2023

November 15, 2023

December 13, 2023

January 17, 2024

February 21, 2024

March 20, 2024

April 17, 2024

May 15, 2024

June 12, 2024

L. Adjournment



Liturgy: Grateful, Thankful, Blessed.

Deacon Ray

End of Year Liturgy

Opening Song: This Day God Gives Me

This day God gives me Strength of high
heaven,
Sun and moon shining, Flame in my hearth,
Flashing of lightning, Wind in its swiftness,
Depths of the ocean, Firmness of earth.

This day God sends me Strength as my
guardian,
Might to uphold me, Wisdom as guide.
Your eyes are watchful, Your ears are list'ning,
Your lips are speaking, Friend at my side.

God's way is my way, God's shield is round me,
God's host defends me, Saving from ill.
Angels of heaven, Drive from me always
All that would harm me, Stand by me still.

Opening Prayer:

God of wisdom, we thank you for all the gifts we have received throughout this school year. We praise you for giving us life, and for choosing us to be your people.

As we come to the end of this school year, we voice our gratitude for the good things you have done in us, and we praise you for all who have shared in the work of this Advisory Committee.

We ask that you bless us in your love and give us refreshment and peace. We praise you, God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen

Gospel Reading:

Mark 6: 30-34

The apostles gathered with Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest awhile." People were coming and going in great numbers, and they had no opportunity even to eat. So they went off in the boat by themselves to a deserted place. People saw them leaving and many came to know about it. They hastened there on foot from all the towns and arrived at the place before them.

Prayer of the Faithful:

Gratitude for the Blessings of Life

We pray for a spirit of gratitude, that we may recognize and appreciate the abundant blessings in our lives. Help us to be mindful of the simple joys and daily miracles that often go unnoticed. May our hearts overflow with gratitude, and may we share our blessings with those in need. We pray to the Lord.

R. Lord hear us.

Gratitude for Rest and Renewal

In a world filled with busyness and constant demands, we ask for the grace to find rest and renewal. Grant us the wisdom to recognize our limitations and the courage to embrace moments of stillness. Help us to create spaces of peace and tranquility, where we can find solace and be rejuvenated. We pray to the Lord.

R. Lord hear us

Gratitude for the Gift of Community

We give thanks for the gift of community, where we find support, encouragement, and love. We are grateful for the friendships and connections that sustain us. Help us to nurture these relationships, to be attentive to the needs of others, and to offer a helping hand to those in need. May our communities be places of welcome, acceptance, and growth. We pray to the Lord.

R. Lord hear us

Gratitude for the Gift of Faith

We offer prayers of gratitude for the gift of faith that sustains us on our journey. We are grateful for the grace to believe, to trust in your promises, and to find hope in times of darkness. Strengthen our faith, Lord, and help us to share the good news with others. May our lives be a testament to your love and grace. We pray to the Lord.

R. Lord hear us

Closing Prayer:

O God of all beginnings and endings,
We praise and thank You for the gift of this school
year. It has been a time filled with grace and
blessings, challenges and opportunities, joys and
sorrows.
Give us the rest and refreshment we need this
summer. Let our efforts of this past year bear fruit.
Bring all of our plans to a joyful conclusion, help us
return to school with a new spirit and a new energy.
May we continue to grow in age, wisdom, knowledge
and grace all the days of our lives.

Amen.

Closing Song: They'll Know We Are Christians

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
And together, we'll spread the news that God is in
our land:

***And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by
our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.***

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, his only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one:

***And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by
our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.***

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.



MINUTES

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 17, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

CEC - Room 301

Attendees:	Bruno Iannicca	Trustee - Chair
	Dely Farrace	Brampton Caledon Community Living - Vice Chair - Representative
	Luz del Rosario	Alternate Chair
	Heather Bialowas	Down Syndrome Assoc. of Peel: Caring Network - Representative
	Lisette Gaylie	Easter Seals Ontario - Representative
	Janice Hatton	Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter - Representative
	Caroline Huxtable	Epilepsy South Central Ontario - Representative
	Debbie Hammond	Dufferin-Peel Educational Resource Workers' Association - Representative
	Kevin Hickey	VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children - Representative
	Sue Steer	Superintendent, Family of Schools
Regrets:	Thomas Thomas	Alternate Trustee
	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
	Christine Koczmar	Community Living Mississauga - Representative
	Lisa Papaloni	Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region - Representative
	Herman Vilorio	Alternate Trustee
	Gian Luca Ferrari	Member At Large, Central Committee for Catholic School Councils
	Shanna Walsh	Down Syndrome Assoc. of Peel: Caring Network - Alternative
	Pam Boniferro	Dufferin-Peel Educational Resource Workers' Association - Alternative
	Andrea Isaac	OECTA Elementary - Alternative
Staff:	Sabrina Baiana	Coordinator, Diverse Learning Needs
	Sharon Chambers	Principal, Vice Principal Association, Elementary
	Joanne Dean	Chief, Speech/Language/Hearing/Vision
	Clementine D'Souza	Consultant, Secondary Transitions and Diverse Learners
	Christiane Kyte	General Manager, Clinical Services and Spec Education
	Cristine Pergotski	Association of Professional Student Services Personnel
	Laura Pincente	Consultant, Secondary Transitions and Diverse Learners
	Katherine Magee	Executive Assistant, Special Education and Learning Services - Recorder
	Peter Cusumano	Principal, Vice Principal Association, Secondary
	Stephanie Strong	Superintendent, Human Resources and Employee Relations
	Pamela Boniferro	President, DPERWA

A. Routine Matters

1. Call to Order and Attendance

Chair of SEAC, Bruno Iannicca, called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m.

2. Opening Prayer
3. Land Acknowledgment - S. Baiana
4. Approval of Agenda

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

5. Approval of Minutes, SEAC Meeting, April 12, 2023

THAT THE MINUTES OF SEAC MEETING, APRIL 12TH, 2023, BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

6. Previous Business - Nil

B. Presentations and Staff Reports

1. Educational Resource Workers Union Presentation: S. Strong, P. Boniferro

Superintendent Papaloni introduced S. Strong, Superintendent, Human Resources and Employee Relations. S. Strong discussed the shortage of Educational Resource Workers nationally and provincially within many school boards. A lesser-known problem is the decline in qualified candidates in this field, due to a significant provincial decline in enrolment. There are not enough candidates to fill these roles. Without government interventions to apply concerted efforts to attract more candidates to this program, enrolment will continue to decline. She suggested SEAC send a letter to the Minister to ask for assistance in promoting this field.

L. Gaylie agreed that this should be pursued to help increase staffing support in the classrooms for students with differing abilities.

Trustee Luz del Rosario expressed her support to help expedite this process.

L. Gaylie mentioned that if parents would like to volunteer in classrooms, this might help with the staffing shortage.

P. Boniferro, President of DPERWA, discussed the aging workforce as another issue in the shortage of staffing. There are also less programs offered by colleges. She appealed to the committee to help encourage greater enrolment.

L. Gaylie asked how are the schools meeting the needs during this shortage? S. Strong said that they are expanding the types of qualifications required to work in this field. L. Gaylie asked if students are going without support in classrooms. S. Strong said that when there is a shortage, emergency staff are brought in.

D. Farrace asked what type of support should the committees provide? S. Strong said they are asking the committees to advocate to the Ministry of Education the need to invest in the faculties that certify future employees, and for the committee members to increase awareness of the shortage through their own agencies. D. Farrace asked why there is a decline? S. Strong said that there are less candidates entering the program. D. Farrace said we need to find out why these candidates are declining. S. Strong answered that she doesn't have this information, perhaps the post-secondary faculties would need to answer this. D. Farrace asked what program is offered by these faculties? S. Strong answered that there are many different programs and they do not have a regulatory body to govern them. D. Farrace asked if S. Strong could reach out to the faculties? P. Boniferro answered that a diagnostic needs to be done. She has reached out to Sheridan College and they do not know. All positions that have to do with caring are on the decline. We cannot make a blanket statement as to the cause of the decline when there are so many different factors that could be causing it.

C. Huxtable offered support through her organization.

Trustee Bruno Iannicca agreed that each community member of the committee should be represented in the letter to be written to the Minister. He would like the letter ready for the June meeting to be reviewed by the committee.

Superintendent Papaloni agreed to have a draft of the letter and circulate to the committee members and present the draft at the following SEAC meeting.

L. Gaylie said that we should highlight the achievements of the Educational Resource Workers. Trustee Bruno Iannicca said that he will raise that with the trustees.

2. Speech and Hearing Month Presentation: J. Dean

Superintendent Papaloni introduced J. Dean, Chief of Speech, Language, Vision and Hearing. J. Dean presented on May is Speech and Hearing Month. During May, the Speech and Language Twitter page highlights information about communication and hearing disorders. She detailed the services provided by the Speech-Language Pathologists. Also, she explained the role of the teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in supporting students with hearing loss to access curriculum. She discussed the May Parent Reaching Out Event, Developing Storytelling with AAC Users. Parents and their children were invited to attend.

L. Gaylie asked if the needs of students with communication difficulties are being met. J. Dean answered that the DP Speech Language services are readily available. The Speech

Language pathologists are available and often in classes even before a formal assessment, working with teachers to put a system into place for the students.

K. Hickey mentioned that he has a daughter in the school board's system and her itinerant teacher assigned to her has been an amazing advocate for his daughter to ensure she has all the supports and technology to assist her. He thanked J. Dean for her wonderful work.

C. Huxtable also wanted to add that her daughter is still receiving many supports. The early intervention was the key, and it is still continuing.

K. Hickey added that the communication from the staff has been incredible.

A member of the public said that she is an ERW and she receives so much support from the staff for the students.

L. Gaylie said that the system has really evolved and said J. Dean is doing an excellent job. J. Dean said she will pass the compliment on to the staff, who work very hard to provide this support.

3. Input Into Board Budget - Final for Submission to Finance: S. Baiana

S. Baiana, Coordinator, Students with Differing Abilities, asked members to fill out the Input into Board Budget form, that will be sent out by K. Magee and to return it by June 1st, 2023.

4. Ron Adea Story: S. Baiana

Superintendent Papaloni introduced S. Baiana, Coordinator, Students with Differing Abilities. S. Baiana talked about a previous guest of SEAC, Ron Adea, who is a member of the ASD Band. They participated in the television show Canada's Got Talent. There is a video that will be shared with the committee.

C. Budget - Nil

D. Reports from Trustees for Receipt

Trustee Luz del Rosario mentioned Catholic Education Week. She thanked all administrators, students, teachers and staff who participated in the successful Catholic Education Week. Most schools held events to celebrate, including the Crowning of Mary. On May 9th, one of our Alumni of St. Martin SS, Major Antonio Culmins, returned to his old high school in a helicopter with his team. On April 17th, the Ministry of Education made an announcement for Grants for Student Needs and Priorities and Partnership Funding, in Bill 98, to improve better outcomes for students in math, destreaming and reading. At the last Faith and Program meeting, trustees received a report on the recent Skills Competitions. The winners have gone on to participate in the provincial competition, and some of our students received an award. Planning for Independence students were included in this competition.

L. Gaylie commented that Bill 98 includes nothing that would assist students with disabilities. The AODA provided amendments to the bill that would be very positive for students with disabilities. She asked if she could share the brief through K. Magee. Superintendent Papaloni answered that she would like to review it, since she felt there were many positive additions in Bill 98. Trustee Luz del

Rosario noted that it is missing items on inclusivity and their association has sent some input to the Ministry regarding this.

Trustee Bruno Iannicca talked about Father Michael Goetz SS awards evening. There were over 400 students and for the first time, the principal invited students with differing abilities. He was very impressed with this inclusion, to recognize their accomplishments as well.

L. Gaylie asked if these students received a certificate of accomplishment? Trustee Bruno Iannicca answered it is an award of a certificate of accomplishment. L. Gaylie asked if this is what they get what they graduate? Trustee Bruno Iannicca answered that no, they get a certificate of achievement when they graduate. L. Gaylie asked what the difference was. The award is to acknowledge them. L. Gaylie said it's important to identify redeeming qualities. Trustee Bruno Iannicca stated that the committee agrees. C. Huxtable wanted to add that her daughter participated in track and field and she was very pleased. H. Bialowas asked if all schools have their students with differing abilities participate. Trustee Bruno Iannicca will investigate. L. Gaylie asked regarding the Joe Sax event, why can't we have something inclusive with everyone? C. Huxtable said that her daughter is included in regular activities. Trustee Bruno Iannicca said that the process is different at different levels. He will investigate the process for Joe Sax.

E. Information/Reports from Community Associations

1. VOICE Presentation: K. Hickey

K. Hickey presented on May is Speech and Language month. His association, VOICE, promotes this through Dress Loud Day. They have a contest for prizes for those you send pictures of participation. They raise funds for children with hearing loss. Resources are available through their website.

2. Easter Seals Ontario: L. Gaylie

L. Gaylie mentioned that Red Shirt Day takes place on the Wednesday of National AccessAbility Week each year. In 2023, Red Shirt Day will take place on Wednesday May 31 during National AccessAbility Week. Red Shirt Day of Action for Accessibility and Inclusion is a day when people across Canada come together and wear red in schools, workplaces and spaces everywhere in order to create a visible display of solidarity: To show their support for persons and families of people living with disabilities and to pledge their commitment to help create a fully accessible and inclusive society that honours and values the contributions of people of all abilities in all aspects of life in Canada.

F. Work Group - Nil

G. Information and Correspondence

1. Letter from Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB Regarding SIP Funding: Superintendent Papaloni

Superintendent Papaloni presented the letter from Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB regarding SIP funding. The letter explains that the funding is not sufficient to cover the costs per student.

2. Letter from the Ministry: Trustee Bruno Iannicca

Superintendent Papaloni presented the letter received by Trustee Bruno Iannicca from the Ministry. It was sent in response to a letter sent by the SEAC members to the Minister, asking for education support past the age of 21 for students with differing abilities. D. Farrace asked for clarification on the continuing education supports the letter mentions. Superintendent Papaloni replied that it is for students aged 18 or older who have not achieved graduation. D. Farrace asked if students with special education needs attend? Superintendent Papaloni answered that if they are pursuing credits they can be accommodated. D. Farrace asked if they do not receive a diploma can they still attend? Superintendent Papaloni said Continuing Education is there only as a means for a student to obtain a diploma. D. Farrace asked how many credits can they accumulate through continuing education? Superintendent Papaloni answered that she can find out. D. Farrace asked if the Ministry's response answered their question? Trustee Bruno Iannicca said that the letter did not answer the question specifically.

H. Communication - Nil

I. Questions Asked of, and by, Committee Members - Nil

J. Questions asked by Public - Nil

K. Future Meetings

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

L. Adjournment

Moved by C. Huxtable

THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 8:56 P.M.

CARRIED

June 6, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
15th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce,

We write this letter on behalf of the members of the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), regarding the recruitment and retention of staff serving in the capacity of Educational Resource Worker (Educational Assistants). All Boards within Ontario employ some version of this job classification which supports our most vulnerable students with complex and diverse needs.

Staffing in this area has seen a steady decline in qualified candidates applying to work in school boards. Over the past ten years, the post-secondary institutions offering programs of qualification for Educational Assistants have produced fewer graduates for school boards to compete for. During that same time frame, we have seen the number of students requiring the support of these workers increase. There simply isn't enough supply to match demand.

Educational Resource Workers provide an invaluable resource to our students. They facilitate the building of necessary life skills, assist with developing self-regulation and independence, provide the required personal care and attend to the safety of our highest needs students.

Without intervention by the Government of Ontario to engage in a concerted effort to support postsecondary institutions in attracting more candidates to these programs, the supply and demand problem will continue to compound. There is precedent for this type of intervention as the province recently committed to spending up to \$200 million to train up to 16,200 additional Personal Support Workers through publicly assisted colleges, private career colleges and district school boards in the 2021-2022 school year.

We would ask that the Ministry of Education collaborate with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to develop a strategy in collaboration with post-secondary institutions to support the recruitment, retention, and training of Educational Resource Workers in the province of Ontario that support our most vulnerable students.

We look forward to your response. Thank you, in advance, for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruno Iannicca, SEAC Chair, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) Trustee Mississauga Ward 6 and 11	Dely Farrace, SEAC Vice Chair, DPCDSB SEAC Association Representative for Brampton Caledon Community Living
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cc: DPCDSB Trustees
MPPs of Dufferin-Peel
Chairs of Special Education Advisory Committees

June 11, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
15th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce,

We write this letter on behalf of the members of the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), regarding the recruitment and retention of staff serving in the capacity of Educational Resource Worker (Educational Assistants). All Boards within Ontario employ some version of this job classification which supports our most vulnerable students with complex and diverse learning needs.

The function of staffing educational resource workers has seen a steady decline in qualified candidates to work within our board. Over the past ten years, the post-secondary institutions offering programs of qualification for Educational Assistants have produced fewer graduates and as a result, a shortfall is felt, not only at our school board but throughout Ontario. Unfortunately, as the numbers of candidates for educational resource workers decrease, the number of students requiring their invaluable support has increased. There simply aren't enough educational resource workers to match the demands of our diverse learners.

Educational Resource Workers provide an invaluable resource to our students. They facilitate teaching and accommodating the needs of our diverse learners within an integrated and inclusive classroom. They help in the building of necessary life skills, assist with developing self-regulation and independence within the planning for independence classrooms. Teachers may teach the lessons; however, it's the indispensable hands-on teaching by our educational resource workers, who truly make a positive impact to our diverse learners. Some of our most vulnerable students even require personal care throughout the day, whether it's to eat, drink or use the washroom. All the while, the educational resource workers are tirelessly helping our diverse learners, with special needs, to be safe in all they do.

To add to their many duties, educational resource workers also facilitate our diverse learners with their specialized equipment and technology to access their learning environment, whether it's in a classroom or gymnasium. Our educational resource workers are right there helping our diverse learners manage their hearing aids, specialized technology, laptops, chrome books, iPads, sophisticated augmentative communication devices, eye gaze devices, and switches. The school board

Itinerant teachers travel from school to school to help their diverse learners; physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech language pathologists, child youth workers, visit our diverse learners at school throughout the year too. As much as the teacher is informed of these specialized professional visits, it's the educational resource worker, who carries on with the prescribed recommendations for their diverse learners, ensuring their needs are met.

It's clear to see how critically important our educational resource workers are to our diverse learners. Although the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for all their students, it is the educational resource workers' comprehensive duties and responsibilities that make or break a student's day. When there is a lack of educational resource workers, our diverse learners are the ones who do not get their complete educational needs met.

Minister Lecce, Are the diverse learners' needs as important as those of the average student? Today, where equity, accessibility and inclusion are paramount, where are the educational resource workers our diverse learners need? The shortfall of educational resource workers in Ontario is a major problem in our education system.

Without intervention by the Government of Ontario to engage in a concerted effort to support postsecondary institutions in attracting more candidates to these programs, the supply and demand problem will continue to compound. There is precedent for this type of intervention as the province recently committed to spending up to \$200 million to train up to 16,200 additional Personal Support Workers through publicly assisted colleges, private career colleges and district school boards in the 2021-2022 school year.

We would ask that the Ministry of Education collaborate with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to develop a strategy in collaboration with post-secondary institutions to support the recruitment, retention, and training of Educational Resource Workers in the province of Ontario.

We thank you, in advance, for your serious consideration of our request, and we look forward to your proactive response to this educational crisis.

Sincerely,



Bruno Iannicca, SEAC Chair, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) Trustee Mississauga Ward 6 and 11	Dely Farrace, SEAC Vice Chair, DPCDSB SEAC Association Representative for Brampton Caledon Community Living
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cc: DPCDSB Trustees

MPPs of Dufferin-Peel

Chairs of Special Education Advisory Committees

DRAFT