



REPORT

Special Education Advisory Committee

§ *Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting October 9, 2013.*



Special Education Advisory Committee Minutes
Education Centre
October 9, 2013 – 12:00 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Lewis, Chair of the Rainy River District School Board; Gwen Barlow, Confederation College; Shelley Dion, Kenora-Rainy River District Child & Family Services (video conference); Allan McManaman, Superintendent of Education; Lorraine Gauthier-Stromberg, Kenora-Rainy River District Child & Family Services (video conference); Christie Gushulak, Community Living-Atikokan (video conference); Kelly Forbes, Special Education Administrator; Brent Tookenay, Seven Generations Education Institute Representative

REGRETS: Allene Perruse, Community Living-Fort Frances & District; Sherri McKelvie, Parent Delegate;

STAFF: Sandra Ward, Recording Secretary; Sarah Irwin-Gardner, Mental Health Leader; Heather Campbell, Director of Education

1. **Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by Lorraine Gauthier-Stromberg at 12:02 p.m.

2. **Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

There was no disclosure of conflict of interest.

3. **Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved by Christie Gushulak and seconded by Shelley Dion.

4. **Welcome and introductions**

5. **Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of September 11, 2013 were approved as circulated.

6. **Business Arising from Minutes**

a) Possible presentations to SEAC

Kelly Forbes suggested moving this item to the end of the meeting and the committee agreed.

Presentations

a) Sarah Irwin-Gardner

Sarah Irwin-Gardner, Mental Health Leader for the Rainy River District School Board described her role with the Board, examining Board programs and practices currently in place to support student mental health and wellbeing and preparing a comprehensive Mental Health Strategy for the Board.

The Mental Health Committee met for the first time this month and representatives from community agencies were invited to attend. The Education Director for Couchiching First Nation Education Dept; Educator/Trainer for Canadian Mental Health Association; Children's



Mental health Project Coordinator for United Native Friendship Centre and a representative from Weechi-it-te-win Family Services were in attendance. School Board staff members included one of our Attendance Counselors and our Special Education Administrator. The Special Education Resource Teacher from Fort Frances High School and the Vice Principal in Rainy River will also be part of the committee. As the Committee evolves there may be other agencies that are asked to join the group to ensure we have as many resources as possible.

Sarah also provided some information on her professional background, having worked with children and youth in Surrey, B.C., as a supply Education Assistant, and as a teacher overseas, with graduate work at the University in Toronto studying counseling psychology. Most recently she was in the role of Personal counselor at a University in Southern Ontario.

b) Heather Campbell

Heather Campbell, Director of Education, discussed Ministry of Education Initiatives with regard to building the next phase in Ontario's Education Strategy. Community consultation and feedback is to occur by mid-November. This feedback will also be shared with our Trustees to review with the Strategic Plan developed in November 2012.

The format being used to gather feedback is a questionnaire entitled, "From Great to Excellent: The Seven Questions". School councils as well as the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee have begun work on the questions. There will also be a District session next week to collect feedback.

The group went through the seven questions and there was discussion on several of the items. Heather recorded their responses on the form.

7. Correspondence

a) *Letter from the Minister of Education to SEAC Chairs*

The Special Education Administrator reviewed the letter and made note of the link to a new SEAC website. Currently the site only shows the activity cycle, and Kelly is going to see if it can be changed so anyone can see more information.

8. New Business

a) **Special Education Administrator's Report**

Kelly Forbes, Special Education Administrator for the Rainy River District School Board, highlighted a couple of points from her October report.

- Referral wait times for various services were reviewed.
- A Special Education Resource Teacher Meeting held on September 24th;
- Power and Manual Lift inspections were done on Sept. 30th and Oct. 3rd and Shopper's Home Health Care is scheduled to visit Atikokan soon.
- Staff will be taking part in a live webcast on October 21st regarding advanced issues in Special Education Law.



List of Possible Presentations to SEAC

Kelly Forbes reviewed the list and gave a brief description of the programs that could be presented to the Committee.

In addition to the items on the list, she also noted there is the Schools Within a College program, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, and if the Committee was interested she could arrange to have Dr. Jennifer Sullivan do a presentation regarding the psychology services she provides for the Board.

The committee members were asked to review the list and indicate their priorities for presentations they would like to see at the meetings. The lists will then be reviewed by the Special Education Coordinator who will plan presentations for future meetings based on the group's priorities. These lists can be sent to Sandra Ward at sward@mail.rrdsb.com.

9. Future Meeting

The next Special Education Advisory Committee has been scheduled for November 13, 2013 at 12:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.