



REPORT

Special Education Advisory Committee

- *Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting September 9, 2015.*



Special Education Advisory Committee Minutes
Education Centre
September 9, 2015 – 12:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Kelly Forbes, Special Education Administrator; Allan McManaman, Superintendent of Education; Mike Lewis, Trustee Rainy River District School Board; Lorraine Gauthier-Stromberg, Kenora-Rainy River District Child & Family Services (videoconference); Kim Redford, Parent Representative; Donna Chief, Seven Generations Education Institute Representative; Shelley Dion, Firefly (videoconference)

REGRETS: Allene Perusse, Community Living-Fort Frances & District; Christie Gushulak, Community Living-Atikokan

STAFF: Sandra Ward, Recording Secretary

1. Call to order

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

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mike Lewis and seconded by Kim Redford.

3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

There was no disclosure of conflict of interest.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

Approval of the minutes of June 10, 2015 as circulated was motioned by Mike Lewis and seconded by Kim Redford.

5. Correspondence

a) **Letter from Minister of Education**

Re: Acknowledgement letter from the Minister to the Special Education Advisory Committee to congratulate the Committee for their collaborative efforts and work supporting the achievement and well-being of student with special needs in the communities.

b) **Certification from Minister of Education**

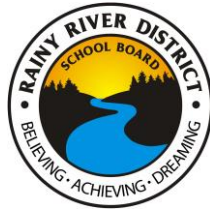
Re: A copy was included in the meeting package.

c) **Letter to Minister – Durham District School Board**

Re: Hiring process for teachers as a result of Regulation 274 and how it impacts students with special needs. This letter supports earlier letters to the Minister regarding the same topic. The Durham District School Board is requesting revisions to the regulation.

d) **Letter to Minister – Wellington Catholic District School Board**

Re: The Special Education Advisory Committee would like to add its voice to concerns



expressed by other Ontario school boards and SEAC groups with regard to the lack of service supports and assessment mechanisms for students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Their recommendation would be to consider the varied and challenging needs of students with FASD in the allocation of special education funding for all students rather than dedicated funding for students with FASD.

It was noted that case workers at Child and Family Service organizations are finding this is becoming a far more open and common diagnosis for children.

e) Letter to Minister – Wellington Catholic District School Board

Re: Hiring process for teachers as a result of Regulation 274 and how it impacts students with special needs. This letter supports earlier letters to the Minister regarding the same topic. The Wellington Catholic District School Board is requesting revisions to the regulation.

f) Policies Under Review

Polices that are currently out for stakeholder input were shared with Committee members and they were asked to relay any feedback regarding these policies to Kaylie Lundgren at kaylie.lundgren@mail.rrdsb.com, by Monday September 28, 2015. All feedback will be brought to the attention of the Policy Committee.

6. New Business

a) Presentation – Sarah Irwin-Gardner – Mental Health Leader

The Mental Health Leader provided an update of the priority areas of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. The five key areas are capacity building, broad collaboration with stakeholders in child and youth mental health, suicide prevention, intervention and postvention, stigma reduction and student voice, and evidence-based mental health promotion and prevention programming.

Programs and resources being used to support these priorities were described. These include:

- SafeTALK
- Mental Health First Aid for Adults Who Interact with Youth
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)
- Community Partners Mental Health Meeting Group
- Mind Up Program Implementation
- School Support Services Counselling Program
- Mental Health and Addictions Nurse

During discussion about the Mind Up program it was noted that it sounds very similar to the ALERT Program that used to be facilitated at the local hospital. Both programs focus on emotional awareness. The Special Education Administrator will investigate whether there could be a partnership with other agencies.

Mike Lewis, Trustee, for the Rainy River District School Board thanked Sarah for doing an excellent job of coordinating all of these programs and resources.



b) Schedule of Meetings 2015-2016

The meeting date schedule was included in the package, and no changes were made.

c) Committee Activity Schedule

The Committee reviewed the schedule and asked that the Special Education Administrator continue to schedule topics for presentation as she has done previously. Committee members are encouraged to let her know if there is any particular topic they would like discussed at a meeting. It was noted that Gwen Marsonet from Confederation College has re-located and will no longer be a Committee member. A replacement for her will be sought.

7. Special Education Administrator's Report

Kelly Forbes, Special Education Administrator for the Rainy River District School Board, provided highlights of the September report.

8. Future Meeting

The next Special Education Advisory Committee meeting will be October 14, 2015.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:47 p.m.



Special Education Administrator's Report – Sept. 9, 2015

School Support Services Counselling

The School Support Services Counselling program is once again providing services for students in the Rainy River District School Board. Referrals can be made by the school principal once parent, guardian, and/or student (age 18+) has consented to services. Weekly intake meetings are scheduled between the Rainy River District School Board and the Kenora Rainy River Child and Family Services. Once written consent is received, students are connected with a counsellor and services begin.

Special Needs Strategy

Planning for the Ontario Special Needs Strategy continues to be underway. A proposed plan for coordinated service planning has been submitted and the rehabilitation proposal will be submitted in early October. Both proposals include a central intake 1-800 number that will act as a single point of access for all specialized services for all community service providers. It is expected that this process will speed up the time it takes for children to access specialized services thus reducing wait times.

Special Education Resource Teacher Training

Training is being provided to Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) on IEPs with a focus on accommodations, modification, and program development and implementation. Priority for training is for those SERTs new to the role with a goal of connecting with all SERTs within the first two weeks of school.

Special Education Computer/Devices

Special Education Equipment such as tablet devices continue to be purchased for students who require the equipment in order to meet their learning needs. The equipment must be prescribed by a recommending professional prior to purchase. The tablet devices are deployed by the STEM Coordinators and training is provided to the student and available to any other staff who work with the student.