



KEEWATIN-PATRICIA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was held via Google Meet

Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 5:30 pm

<https://meet.google.com/tcr-bxot-amu>

Present	Gerald Kleist	Debbie Michaud	Joan Kantola
	Evie O'Flaherty	Kari Couch	Darrin Head
	Shirley Jette	Michelle Sanderson	Lana Goodman
	Heather Bird	Nerina Facca	
		Brenda Barradell – recording secretary	
Regrets	Olivia Karl	Eric Bortlis	Jen Bachynski
	Pearl Alver	Emily Kaldeway	Terri Forster
	Shannon Struk -had technical issues signing in		
Guest	Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education		

Call to Order at The meeting was called to order at 5:30 CDT

Welcome Evie O'Flaherty welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda Moved by: Kari Couch
Seconded by: Gerald Kleist

THAT the agenda for the Oct. 21, 2020 meeting be approved.
CARRIED

Approval of the Minutes Moved by: Darrin Head
Seconded by: Debbie Michaud

THAT the minutes of the meeting on Sept. 16, 2020 having been circulated, be confirmed with the following change:
"Welcome to Olivia Karle as the alternate representative for Kenora Association for Community Living."

CARRIED

Business Arising - nothing

Presentations
- Director of Education, Sherri-Lynne Pharand

Successes and Challenges of School Start up for 2020 – 2022

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education gave an excellent and informative presentation regarding the successes and challenges of the school start up for 2020 – 2021.

The Chair thanked Sherri-Lynne for her presentation and for all the work ‘behind the scene’ to ensure things run smoothly this year.

Joan Kantola also thanked the Director for her guidance during this very stressful time, for staff, students, and families. She noted that Sherri-Lynne was ‘the calm in the storm’.

Debbie Michaud thanked the school board for the efforts of all staff, noting that her own children are thriving this year, partly due to the smaller classes. She particularly thanked the Special Education team for their planning, flexibility, and care for our special needs students.

Point of Personal Privilege – Joan Kantola:

Joan Kantola shared the following information with the committee: There will be a change in the Superintendent of Education for Special Education position, as she has accepted a position with School Mental Health Ontario for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. Joan will begin transitioning into her new role, School Mental Health Implementation Coach / SMH Northern Focus Portfolio Lead, within the next few weeks. School Mental Health Ontario works together with Ontario school districts to support student mental health and Joan’s new role will see her serving English language school boards in the Thunder Bay region by providing ongoing support to board mental health leadership teams through the development and implementation of the mental health strategy and action plan.

The Chair thanked Joan for all her work with SEAC over the past years. She wished her well in her new role.

Sherri-Lynne also thanked Joan for all her work with Special Education over the past years in building a strong team to support the students with special needs at KP. Her wisdom and leadership will be missed but she will be around to mentor her replacement.

COVID-19 School Update
- Nerina Facca, Special Education Leader

Nerina shared her thoughts on the start of this busy school year. She noted that it has been a joyous year, with a lot of differences in how students are supported, both in the virtual school and the classrooms. Supporting the staff is also important and the special education team has done several professional development presentations. They have been collaborating with the curriculum team to ensure that special education isn’t in a silo, but rather a synchronous way

of thinking, focusing on inclusivity and recognizing that we want to meet the needs of our special needs students in the same environment with their peers.

The Chair commented that it was so good to hear all the positive things that are happening in our schools.

**Association
Reports**

Lana Goodman - Firefly

FIREFLY clinicians are now allowed to see all clients, no matter their priority ranking for face-to-face visits. Virtual should still be the first option for service for all priority level of clients.

2 new Directors have been hired within FIREFLY:

- Darcia Curtis – Director of Service Excellence and Partnerships, Child and Youth Mental Health
- Jackie Hummelbrunner – Director of Service Excellence and Partnerships, Child and Youth Developmental Services (CYDS)

SNAP:

- Kenora - began it's 13 week program at the beginning of October. Due to the pandemic, we have had to minimize our group numbers to ensure the health and well being of our clients, their families and our staff. Currently we are offering both a boys and girls group – with four participants each. To offset the limited number of caregivers (1 per child in person), we are offering virtual groups for those caregivers interested in receiving the information, but unable to attend in person with their child. Feedback thus far has been great.
- Dryden – trying to gather families to get started

AUTISM:

Minister of MCCSS, Todd Smith:

- provided further clarification about eligible and ineligible services and supports that can or cannot be purchased using your childhood budget or interim one-time funding during the COVID-19 outbreak
- extended the amount of time you have to spend your childhood budget funding and submit your expense form by up to six months, if necessary. You now have up to 18 months to spend your childhood budget and submit your expense form
- extended the March 31, 2020 deadline to submit your Ontario Autism Program registration form and supporting documents to be eligible for interim one-time funding. We will establish a new deadline at a future date.

Member Reports

none

Correspondence

Letter from Queens University re Study to explore how leaders, Superintendents of Special Education, Directors of Children’s Treatment Centres or Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) members envision effective collaboration in school-based rehabilitation therapy services in Ontario.

The Chair recommended that SEAC has some input in this focus group – all are welcome and encouraged to participate. Lana Goodman has put her name forward to be involved.

Other Business

Topics for presentations this year:

November: Richard Findlay will present financial update as it pertains to special education

December: Roles and Responsibilities of SEAC members

January: Children’s Mental Health

Heather Bird asked about the percentage of virtual students

Joan Kantola said we have approximately 35% of our students in the virtual school.

Nov. 2 is change date for elementary re-organization.

Nov. 12 is the change date for secondary (with cut-off for the survey being Oct. 29)

There is a tentative re-organization in place now, but it has to go to senior team for approval.

Darrin Head commented on the technical issues faced tonight with some of our presenters and noted how difficult/stressful it would likely be for a student trying to learn in this environment – especially for special education students. He shared his opinion on the importance of having students learning *in the classroom* rather than online learning. He feels there is a more level playing field in the bricks and mortar school.

Next Meeting:

November 18, 2020 –

Adjournment

6:30 p.m. CDT