

Land Acknowledgement by Principal Pauli

1. Call to Order – 1:07 pm

2. Attendance via Zoom online meeting platform

Albina Lavictoire (Chair)	Chris Guillemette
Alan Bottomley	Kim Pauli
Kimberley Gignac	Laura Hansman
Tim Graves	Caroline Lebreque
Lisa Paradis	Carole Couillard
Louise Sargent	
Candy St. Onge	

Regrets: Nichole King, John Cochrane

Guests: Louise Maughan

3. Approval of Agenda: As Amended

October 20th, 2022

Moved – Candy St. Onge

Seconded – Louise Sargent

Carried. No Conflict of interest

4. Approval of Minutes:

September 22nd, 2022

Moved – Chris Guillemette

Seconded – Alan Bottomley

Carried.

Selective Mutism by Louise Maughan, Lead Psychologist for the Near North DSB

- Staff are encountering an increase in selective mutism in our schools.
- This is an anxiety-based condition, but there have been misunderstandings around this and not a clear pathway for these students. The services have varied across the Board.
- A full day in person session on selective mutism took place with staff with Dr. Angela Mcholm, followed with a ½ day virtual session.
- Selective mutism does not fall under one specific discipline.
- The PD Day led to some rich staff discussions as they worked through the practical situations led by Dr. Mcholm.

- The defining feature is the child does not speak in certain situations (not a global situation). Typically, the child does not speak in school, however outside of school they present as a different child.
- There is a range of severities, and it is known that this is anxiety based.
- Selective mutism is different from autism, a language impairment, or a very shy child.
- It is not tied to academic difficulty as these students are likely to have average thinking and problem-solving skills.
- As this is an anxiety-based disorder, resources such as CBT and behaviour-based treatments have been successful.
- The cycle of negative reinforcement needs to be broken. The child becomes anxious about the situation, avoids it, feels better and then repeats this cycle.
- Behaviour approach: to increase the student's ability to tolerate this discomfort and distress. Build a hierarchy of exposure but gently and progressively to support the student. The goal would be for the student to speak openly and comfortably in school.
- The process is gradual and highly individualized.
- The earlier for intervention the better.
- The first step is education, then building a management team for that student. This will look different for each student.
- Social workers will take the lead as facilitators.
- The parent should be involved in this process as much as possible.
- Dr. Mcholz has developed a companion guide that has been purchased and distributed to every school. This will be used by the team when developing and implementing the intervention plan.
- Still in the planning stages for the referral process however a pilot project will take place and then full implementation board wide.

Membership Discussion

- Once the municipal election has concluded the new Board will be formed at the November Board meeting.
- SEAC members have the same term as the Board.
- It was asked if committee members could have their organization letter to Superintendent Graves or Krista Holmes by November 8th. A board report will be submitted, and the membership contact list will be updated.

PAAC on SEAC: Review and Comparison of agendas

- Each year the group reviews the SEAC annual agenda with the provincial committee to make sure it aligns.
- EQAO results are not available yet. Once reports have been received and reviewed it will be brought back to this committee in November.

Community Partner Updates

- Community partners night is taking place at Almaguin Highlands school on October 26th so all parents can see what services/resources are available.
- Tonight, is the National disability employment awareness night at the battalion's game. Community living will have a booth with information and resources available.

This will continue through the month of October to help support people who have a disability in getting competitive employment within the community.

- Community living supports community organizations each year and this year the multi-cultural centre and food bank were selected.

Correspondence received

- No letters received.
- Thanks goes out to all the trustees who have been involved in SEAC. It is such a significant role.
- A huge thanks goes out to trustee Bottomley for all his hard work, advocacy, and commitment throughout these years. He will be missed.

Planning and Accommodation Updates

- This item will be moved to the next meeting.

Ministry updates

- CUPE negotiations are taking place. Some discussions will take place at the central level and others will take place at the local level.
- CUPE will be in a strike position shortly. Currently there is no role for NNDSB or local Boards.
- Funding has been received for the parent reaching out grants. This has been a yearly fund from the Ministry to allow local parent councils to produce projects or events that would help more parents engage in their student's education. The committee is developing a criterion for this and SEAC members were encouraged to add their input by email.
- EQAO results are just being released.

Special Education Budget Update

- Superintendent Van Haesendonck will be joining the group next month for a budget presentation.

Board report (oral) – (Board Trustee)

- Trustee Bottomley will be missed on this Board and all his help and support has been appreciated.
- WJ Fricker is scheduled to open September 2023, it was suggested that SEAC tour the new school in the spring of 2024.
- October 24th is the municipal elections with the inaugural meeting of the trustees being held on November 15th.

Special Education Report

- Monday October 24th is a PD Day and EAs will engage in three regional trainings: BMS/strategies for challenging behaviour, wellness/resilience and supporting students with Autism and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders/Equity.
- The psych team has been collaborating with program leads to update their knowledge around destreaming, math and literacy programming and tools.

- The behaviour team has had a busy start to the year with forty-four referrals just in the month of September.
- The department continues to have hiring and staffing challenges, particularly in the EA employee group.
- Monthly “check ‘ins” are taking place with Learnstyle. The Board continues to collaborate closely with them, and fifty-six sessions have occurred already.

SEAC Chair

- Thanks goes out to Trustee Bottomley for all his support with this group.
- Trustee Bottomley encouraged the group to attend the November 30th electric car show and climate meeting in Burk’s Falls.

Items for next Agenda

Budget Presentation

Next meeting date: November 17th, 2022

Adjourned: 2:12pm

Motion – Alan Bottomley

Seconded – Chris Guillemette

Carried.