

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Guided by Gospel Values and Catholic Virtues, in partnership with home and Church, we educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential in a safe and caring environment.

MINUTES of the SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A regular meeting was held in a hybrid format in person at CEC, 320 Bloomington Rd. W and virtually over Google Meet on **October 21, 2024** at **7:00 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Committee Members:	N, Byrne*, C. Chen*A. Connolly*, A. Grella, D. Legris*, S. Leckey*, R. Liscio*, J. Man*, N. Welch, J. Wigston, Y. Zhou*
Association Representatives:	J. Akleh*, M. Marcello*, C. Sandig*
Administration:	A.Cabraja*, L.Lausic*, J. Powers, E. Strano*
Regrets:	M. Xue
Recording:	C. Mong*
Guest Presenters:	M. Arista Vallario, <i>Special Education Department Head, SEH YCDSB</i> M. Liberatore, <i>Itinerant Work Experience Teacher, YCDSB</i> N. Shwaizer, <i>LDAYS</i> H. Sirola, <i>LDAYS</i>

*Denotes virtual attendance

CALL TO ORDER / ATTENDANCE

1.0 Prayer and Land Acknowledgement

2.0 Approval of New Material Nil – No New Material

2.1 Roll Call

3.0 Moment of Inspiration

Unity in Diversity: Ontario Culture Day is an annual event. This year the City of Vaughan hosted the event and two of our secondary schools St. Elizabeth CHS and St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS participated in this collaborative event showcasing our students artistic abilities!

5.0 Approval of Agenda October 21, 2024

Motion– Agenda approved (Legris / Welch)

6.0 Approval of the Minutes September 16, 2024

Motion - Minutes approved (Byrne / Welch)

7.0 SEAC Report to Board

Report 2024:09 – **September 2024**

8.0 Information Items

8.1 Board Meeting Date: October 29, 2024

Items 7.0-8.1 Received on Block (Wigston / Legris)

9.0 Correspondence

10.0 Presentations / Discussions

10.1 Learning Disabilities of York Region – Simcoe (LDAYS)

- Learning Disabilities of York Region – Simcoe (LDAYS) provided an overview of their programs. The presentation introduced LDAYS champions and the great work they continue to do to support students with learning disabilities.

10.2 Student Services September Recap and updates

- Superintendent Powers presented a recap of programs and services delivered by the Student Services department over the last month, see page 3.

10.3 SEAC presentations

- Chair Grella made a request to association representatives to send any presentation to cindy.mong@ycdsb.ca

11.0 Business Arising

Nil

12.0 Action Items

Nil

13.0 Association Reports

- LDAYS: Upcoming Events, Programs and Services – Flyer attached
- Community Living: Halloween dance and other programs - [link](#)

14.0 Items for Future Agendas

- SIP Update
- SEA Process Updates
- Mental Health Services updates

15.0 Next Meeting: Monday November 11, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m. in a hybrid format over Google Meet and at CEC Board office, 320 Bloomington Rd W Aurora ON.

16.0 Motion to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.

Meeting adjourned (Welch / Byrne)

10.2 Student Services September 2024 Recap and updates

Mental health Services:

MH provided inservices to gr 7 - 8 teachers on mandatory lessons, gr 10 careers teachers on new mandatory mh lessons, gr 9 religion teachers on student mh literacy lessons. Mental health workers are in schools delivering a new 3 part all about anxiety workshop using inside out characters and confident me workshops to spec ed classes. Two mental health workers are focusing on home instruction students this year to provide services and work towards a return to school. Oct 10 marked World Mental Health Day- we were excited to host our staff and student mental health ambassadors to a leadership day where they spent half the day planning mental health initiatives for their schools and half day at Copperwood Trail Farm where they interacted with horses and worked on their leadership skills.

This was a busy start to the year as the ABA and Behaviour Resource departments worked to support Joint Health and Safety Initiatives through their systemwide in-person delivery of BMS Practitioner training. As of today's PA day, approximately 215 additional Education Workers will have received their updated certification. This effort is further supported at the school level through the ongoing and timely response by these departments to support student-specific needs through the development of individualized BMS Safety Plans, Positive Behaviour Support Plans, and behaviour consultation/training.

Amidst all of this, Behaviour Resource Workers still managed to deliver workshops to 50+ classrooms targeting topics ranging from friendship to cyberbullying to anger management and worked to support student's understanding of stress and how to cope.

September and October also marked the return of the ever popular Classwide Peer Acceptance workshops. Over the past month, the ABA Services department (which consists of just 6 team members) delivered in-class workshops to 43 different Elementary and Secondary Classrooms in schools across the Board. Students participated in classroom discussions and hands-on activities that were tailored for their specific classroom and aimed at empathy and acceptance for those peers who experience the world differently.

Last but not least, we are so pleased to share a joint initiative by Behaviour Resource and Mental Health Services who are partnering with Safe Schools to help educators and school staff refresh their knowledge about vaping and to plan for supportive, empowering conversations with their students to support their quit efforts. As part of today's PA Day, student services created a self-directed module that was accessed by Educators, entitled "Enhancing Mental Health Literacy and Building a Vape-Free Environment." Educators received information to build awareness about the contents of the new mental health literacy modules from the ministry along with real-world strategies and brief intervention skills to apply in their interactions with youth who vape. Educators will have also learned how they can support students to use stress management strategies and build knowledge about supports at school, in the community and online and how to help students access the support should they need it.

Occupational & Physical Therapy Services:

Continue to support schools with health management plans and personal care plans for toileting including training where applicable.

Continue to assess and procure equipment through the SEA (Special Equipment Allocation) fund or to ensure students' safety and access to curriculum.

Have received over 650 referrals for OT Services since the beginning of the school year.

Elementary Special Education:

In June Student Services purchased Writing A-Z licenses for elementary Special education teachers using a Ministry of Education TPA for Literacy.

Writing A-Z is a digital K-5 writing program that can be used as a compliment to any core literacy plan. It aligns with the Science of Reading, provides explicit systematics lessons and materials that focus on opinion, informative and narrative writing. Additionally, it includes grammar lessons and explicit lessons related to the process of writing.

It lends itself well to differentiated instruction as it provides various entry points for learners. It also includes graphic organizers, rubrics and editing checklists at various levels to foster inclusion for all students in the classroom within each writing task. As of today 70 schools are currently using the licenses.

Another digital platform being implemented by our Elementary Special Education teachers is Lexia Power up. Lexia provides students with a blended learning model where students are provided skill development through the online program to close some gaps for language learning. At this time in Elementary we are currently supporting grade 7&8 learners who are receiving core support related to literacy. We delivered a Lexia workshop this past month for teachers new to Core, and continue to provide Lexia refreshers for those who have already been trained and may need ongoing support. So far this year, teachers have requested 506 licenses for students in grade 7 and 8.

Secondary Special Education:

Planning is well underway for our new secondary project funded by the MOE through the *Removing Barriers for Students with Disabilities grant*. YCDSB will be using this grant money to focus on building a new YCDSB Transition Strategy. As we begin to develop this strategy to support students with disabilities transitioning to a post-secondary destination we look forward to leveraging our existing partnerships with specialized community support services and educational institutions to create transitional tools and resources for our students with special needs who are preparing to exit the educational system. We intend to provide transition training to our staff, students and parents to better prepare students for their post-secondary pathway. YCDSB will collaborate with York Support Services Network (YSSN) to build transitional support resources for our students with special education needs in York Region. Their specialized knowledge and support services are uniquely positioned to help bridge families to the supports they need for their young adults in high school and beyond. We will certainly keep SEAC updated throughout the year.



October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month: Raising Awareness

DON'T DIS MY ABILITIES!

HELP STOP THE STIGMA AND REALIZE THE ABILITIES!

#LDMONTH

October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month



Why Join In?

This October, we want to make sure students have the resources and support they need to thrive. Let's come together to celebrate our differences and stand up for those with learning disabilities (LDs). Learn how you can promote awareness in your school and community.

Classroom Ideas

Students can create a campaign or project to promote awareness and funds. Doing so will help increase understanding, reduce stigma, and provide essential resources for those affected. **Here are some ideas:**

1. Create a Video

Create a video competition for the movement. This could include acting out a scene, busting myths, or sharing personal stories. Use your creativity to educate and engage others!

2. Showcase Famous Faces of LD

Create posters to plaster throughout your school of famous people with LDs. Highlight their achievements and how they overcame challenges, inspiring your peers to recognize the potential in everyone, regardless of their learning differences.



Join the LDAYS Movement!

We are raising awareness through our various initiatives!

- Watch this impactful message from our Champions. [Click Here](#)
- Watch our LDAYS Plugged-In podcast episode for Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. [Click Here](#)

Get in touch with us to have our Champions or Resource Facilitators present on topics related to Learning Disabilities. Discover valuable insights through our educational presentations designed for students, educators, and parents.

CONTACT US

Email: info@ldays.org
Phone #: (905)-884-7933
Website: www.ldays.org
Instagram: [lda_ys](https://www.instagram.com/lda_ys)





Register

Contact Sara Carnovale
905-884-7933 ext. 3
sara.carnovale@ldays.org

[Register for Elementary](#)

[Register for High School](#)

Pricing

\$35 for members
\$50 for non-members
per session
Minimum 4 sessions

Customized sessions at LDAYS office or
virtual (1:1 participant to facilitator)

For Individual Students

**grade 7-8 and grade 11-12 identified with a learning disability
and/or ADHD**

The foundation of this program will help participants identified with Learning Disabilities and/or ADHD to develop life skills to succeed academically and vocationally. The participant will gain an understanding of their strengths and areas of need as well as a better understanding of their LD and/or ADHD.

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding LDs/ADHD and learning preferences (i.e. review psycho-educational assessment).
- Develop self-advocacy strategies for success (i.e. review (I.E.P.) Individual Education Plan).
- Build executive function skills (i.e. organization, time management, etc.)
- Preparation for school assessments (i.e. test, exam, assignment).
- Successful transitions into high school and/or post-secondary endeavours to ease anxiety and stress



Register Online

The program is presented in class

6 participants
4 Sessions

Pricing

\$240 per group

For More Information

Contact Sara Carnovale
905-884-7933 ext. 3
sara.carnovale@ldays.org

For High School Students

who have been identified with a Learning Disability and/or ADHD and are transitioning into post-secondary and/or the workplace.

The foundation of this program is built on the development of self advocacy skills, such skills that will benefit the participant both academically and vocationally. Participants will gain an understanding of their strengths and areas of difficulty, as well as an understanding of their LD and/or ADHD. Information will also be given on how to transition from post-secondary and/or the workplace, along with assistance for making academic and career choices with a greater potential for success.

Learning Objectives:

- Learning styles and understanding areas of LD and/or ADHD
- Strategies for organizational and time management skills
- Building study skills and exam preparation
- Self-advocacy and social skills
- Transitioning into the workplace, college, or university
- Pre-employment and job skills



Register Online

The program is presented in class

4 Sessions
6 participants per group

Pricing

\$240 per group

For More Information

Contact Sara Carnovale
905-884-7933 ext. 3
sara.carnovale@ldays.org

For Students Transitioning To High School

For students in grade 8 who have been identified with a Learning Disability and/or ADHD.

The foundation of this program will help participants identified with Learning Disabilities and/or ADHD to develop life skills to succeed academically and vocationally. The participant will gain an understanding of their strengths and areas of need as well as a better understanding of their LD and/or ADHD.

Learning Objectives:

- Understanding LDs/ADHD and learning preferences (i.e. review psycho-educational assessment).
- Develop self-advocacy strategies for success (i.e. review (I.E.P.) Individual Education Plan).
- Build executive function skills (i.e. organization, time management, etc.)
- Preparation for school assessments (i.e. test, exam, assignment).
- Successful transitions into high school easing anxiety and stress.

**EARLY BIRD
SPECIAL**

SOCIAL SKILLS

**RICHMOND HILL, NEWMARKET
& SIMCOE!**

Early bird member: \$220
Early bird non-member: \$270

REGISTER NOW!



- 6 week program for students ages 6-12 with Learning Disability and/or ADHD
- Teaches kids valuable skills necessary to form healthy relationships; skills include effective communication, self advocacy, relationship building, emotional regulation and much more!!
- Facilitate active listening and effective communication skills. Improve social skills through collaboration and patience

WINTER DATES

Richmond Hill: November 12th - December 17th

Newmarket: November 11th - December 16th

Bradford: November 13th - December 19th

2025 DATES

Richmond Hill: January 22nd - March 3rd

Newmarket: January 21st - February 25th

Simcoe: January 22nd - February 26th

Contact Tori at
tori.bekolay@ldays.org
or 905 - 884 - 7933 ext
4. for more details!



Idays • Learning Disabilities
Association of York-Simcoe

The right to learn, the power to achieve