

Welcome to the first edition of **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWS**. This newsletter will be published twice a year to keep you informed and updated on the topic of Special Education at the Rainbow District School Board.

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A Message from the Special Education Advisory Committee

Welcome back as we start a new school year! This newsletter is an exciting way for our Committee and SEAC members to stay connected to students with exceptionalities and their parents/guardians. This first edition focuses on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the process for developing it which takes place early in the school year. Also included is information concerning local community organizations and support groups which can assist parents and students as they navigate the education system, in partnership with our principals and educators. We hope you find that this newsletter is helpful and informative. We encourage you to provide us with feedback on this new communications initiative, and any other information or content you would like to have included in future editions. Let's work together towards "success for all"!

Judy Hunda, SEAC Chair

Ron Lessard, SEAC Vice-Chair

What Is SEAC?

SEAC is a Special Education Advisory Committee. SEACs are mandated in Ontario in Regulation number 464/97 under the Education Act.

The Special Education Advisory Committee

- makes recommendations to the board in respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education;
- provides information to parents.

SEAC Meetings

SEAC meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Gord Ewin Centre for Education at 275 Loach's Road. (Please note: The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 13th, 2006). Meetings are open to the public. We welcome your attendance or written input. For further information, contact David Squarzolo at (705) 523-3308 ext. 213

Meet Your SEAC Members

TRUSTEE Judy Hunda Trustee, SEAC Chairperson
Jeanna Miller Trustee

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Sadie Marr AD/HD Parent Support Group
Rebecca Ingham Autism Society of Ontario – Sudbury Chapter
Debbie Barclay Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Jodi Gibbons Council for Exceptional Children
Dr. Ken Barss Down Syndrome Association of Sudbury
Susan Bebamash Kenjgwin Teg Educational Institute – Lakeview School
M'Chigeeng First Nation
Ron Lessard Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury
Kelly-Lee Assinewe N'Swakamok Native Friendship Centre
Cathy Landriault Sudbury Community Service Centre
Lynn Doucette Sudbury Manitoulin Foster Parents Association

BOARD PERSONNEL (non voting)

Norm Blaseg Superintendent of Schools
Rita Della Vedova Principal, Special Education Programs and Services
David Squarzolo Special Education Consultant, SEAC Secretary

From the Desk of the Superintendent of Schools Responsible for Special Education

In a written survey, parents/guardians of students with special needs told us that a newsletter would be the most effective vehicle to enhance communications. Based on your feedback and a recommendation from the SEAC Communications Subcommittee, we are pleased to provide you with a copy of this first edition of our SEAC newsletter. SEAC, which represents parent groups and community organizations, continues to provide input and advice on the special education programs and services for the Board. In addition, close to 200 parents/guardians responded to our invitation for input and provided us with valuable insight to help us refine our special education services. We are committed to keeping in touch with you and hope this newsletter complements our ongoing communications between home and school.

Norm Blaseg
Superintendent of Schools

“Special education cannot be defined in a single statement. It is a process, a journey that takes different shapes for different students at different times in their educational careers. An IEP provides the roadmap for the completion of that journey.”

Individual Education Plans

What is an IEP?

An IEP is...

- a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs – that is, the strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning;
- a record of the particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations, given the student's identified learning strengths and needs;
- a working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course, as outlined in the Ministry of Education's curriculum policy documents;
- a working document that identifies alternative expectations, if required, in program areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum;
- a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations;
- an accountability tool for the student, the student's parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum.

An IEP is not...

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student;
- a list of all the teaching strategies used in regular classroom instruction;
- a document that records all learning expectations, including those that are not modified from the regular grade level curriculum expectations;
- a daily lesson plan.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP). A Resource Guide, 2004. The Ontario Ministry of Education.



CEC Recognizes Local Educator

Mary MacGregor, Special Education Resource Teacher at Northeastern Elementary School, received two prestigious awards from the Council for Exceptional Children at the CEC Provincial Conference held in Sudbury October 20 to 22, 2005. The CEC Sudbury Chapter nominated Mary for the Teacher of the Year Award for the local region. She was subsequently selected to receive the distinguished Kenn Kloby Teacher of the Year Award - a provincial honour. Both awards recognize Mary MacGregor's contribution to the educational growth of exceptional students.

The IEP: How Parents Can Help

- ✓ Communicate regularly with the student's teacher and attend meetings.
- ✓ Keep records of information that may be helpful, especially meetings or discussions that may have taken place outside the school.
- ✓ Share insights about the student's likes, dislikes, relevant medical information and assessments the school may not have.
- ✓ Ask questions. Clarify definitions, jargon, and the roles of those participating. Ask for an explanation of procedural issues that are unclear.
- ✓ Assume the best. Professionals share your goal to develop your child's full potential.

- Weber & Bennett, *Special Education in Ontario Schools* (5th edition) 2004



Students from Rainbow Schools participated in the Board's Challenge Meet at Laurentian University on June 20, 2006.

Individual Education Plans: A Lesson in Partnership

Every student in the publicly-funded school system who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Each IEP is a truly *individualized* document because it is designed for that student, and that student alone. The IEP process creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to increase the chances for academic success. The IEP can be a testament of quality education for students with special education needs.

Information gathering for the IEP should include a review of the student's records (e.g. IPRC statements of decisions and recommendations), relevant assessment data, consultations with school personnel and other professionals, and any information gained through observation of the student. Consultations with parents and students are an important part of the process.

The Ministry recommends a collaborative team approach, where information on a student's strengths and needs can be shared, and plans can be made on teaching strategies, accommodations, technology supports, and assessment techniques. Parents and students 16 and over must be consulted on the development of the IEP, and sign a form to affirm they were consulted in the development process.

The principal must see that the IEP is complete, that copies are sent to the parents and student (if 16 or older), and that all relevant school personnel are aware of the IEP's content. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the IEP is implemented. However, parents also need to check that all teachers are aware of and understand the contents of the IEP. Parents and students should collaborate with teachers to make sure the provisions are implemented. If students themselves understand and accept the IEP provisions, this can go a long way toward successful implementation.

The IEP must be reviewed and learning expectations updated at least once in every reporting period (i.e. each term where there is a report card). According to *The IEP Resource Guide* (2004), "If certain strategies cease to be effective, it is imperative that the staff working with the student seek out and implement new teaching methods and accommodations". Once again, parents and students are to be consulted if there are significant changes to the student's learning expectations or accommodations.

In 2000 the Ministry of Education issued standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation of IEPs. Between 2001 and 2003, the Ministry conducted reviews of IEPs prepared by school boards across Ontario. On the basis of information gathered through these reviews, and consultations with educators and parents, a revised IEP Resource Guide was published in 2004.

By Diane Wagner and Carter Hammett
Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Special Education Plan 2006 - 2007 Approved

After nine months of discussion and review, SEAC recommended that the Board approve the revised Special Education Plan for the 2006-2007 school year. At the June 12, 2006 meeting of the Rainbow District School Board, the Board approved amendments to the plan, for submission to the Ministry of Education. SEAC members are very proud, not only of their participation and input, but the continued commitment of the Board to meet the needs of all exceptional students. This commitment is reflected in the Director of Education's Message in the Special Education Plan, 2006-2007. A copy of the plan is available at every school.

A Message from the Director of Education Special Education Programs and Services 2006 - 2007

All exceptional students have the right to fulfill their potential through strong support systems and stimulating program opportunities. Collaborative relationships with parents and strong community partnerships will continue to impact the success of our exceptional students.

The Special Education Plan 2006-2007 speaks strongly to the inclusion of all students in the schools of Rainbow District School Board. Although many parents choose a self-contained class option for their children, the majority of exceptional students will continue to be part of regular classrooms in community schools. This does not mean that they will learn in the same way or at the same rate as other students. It does mean that curriculum may be modified and accommodations will be made to instruction and assessment in order to facilitate success for all students in relation to their own learning potential and needs.

The Special Education Plan 2006-2007 meets the Standards for School Board Plans established by the Ministry of Education, Reg. 306 of the Education Act, and establishes programs and services, which are consistent with the provincial funding model. Reflected in the Special Education Plan 2006-2007 are adjustments based on community input and a careful analysis of needs on a school-by-school basis. We are pleased to be able to continue early intervention programs and provide some enhancement to staffing allocations.

We appreciate this opportunity to share a plan, which recognizes the complex needs of our students, and at the same time recognizes the opportunities exceptional students have to participate as valued and active members of our school communities.

We hope that all our exceptional students will feel our support as they strive to be the best they can possibly be.

Jean C. Hanson
Director of Education
Rainbow District School Board

Special Education: What's In the News at the Rainbow District School Board

- In late September, The Ministry of Education is hosting a symposium in Toronto called "Tools for Learning". Every school board in Ontario will be participating. RDSB will be sending a number of staff who will return with considerable knowledge to share about the use of assistive technology to support literacy and numeracy instruction for all grades from kindergarten to Grade 12.
 - In partnership with Laurentian University, all Grade 7 and 8 classes, and secondary schools will benefit from the "Adopt a School Program". Under this innovative program, university students, trained in the use of assistive technology software (Kurzweil, Dragon NaturallySpeaking), will go into our schools and provide hands-on training to students who use these programs and their teachers. We currently have over 500 curriculum textbooks scanned for use with the Kurzweil software.
 - Starting this fall, we will hold educational sessions for parents of students with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder). Parents can expect to hear from us soon!
 - FM amplification systems, installed in Grade 1, 2 and 3 classrooms, give students a front row seat optimizing classroom sound quality and creating a more intimate environment for learning.
-

Collaboration Is Key: A Message from Our IEP Lead Teacher

In Rainbow Schools, everyone wins when parents and educational staff come together during the development of the IEP in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. The collaborative planning that takes place when all vested parties meet, results in an IEP that reflects the student's current level of achievement, learning strengths and needs, as well as the services that are needed to improve performance and the specific goals that are set in order for the student to progress through the curriculum.

For parents of children who have an exceptionality, the IEP meeting is a prime opportunity to communicate with the school staff regarding their child's exceptionality and educational needs. For educational staff, this meeting is an ideal time to learn more about their student and to involve parents in the learning process in a meaningful and constructive way.

One of the most important sources of information for the IEP team is the child. Prior to the IEP development, parents should discuss concerns about school with their child and be prepared to share this information with the team.

IEPs are a constant reference tool for both teachers and parents. The IEP is typically developed at the beginning of the school year or semester but can be changed or altered at any time, to better reflect the student's needs and progress. It is a working plan used by educational staff on an ongoing basis.

Parents and students are encouraged to conference with staff. This dialogue provides valuable input which may assist with the development of the IEP and more specifically, the general accommodations. It is very important that only a few accommodations be listed on the IEP each term/semester, so that the accommodations can be delivered and measured for effectiveness. At the end of each reporting period, the accommodations are reviewed and either maintained, polished, altered or discarded. This is a process. It takes time to solidify the key accommodations required by the individual student. It is very beneficial for parents to implement the IEP accommodations at home with their child.

Feedback from parents or students about the effectiveness of the IEP is most welcome. When all IEP team members focus on the child and his or her individual educational needs, communicate regularly and work collaboratively, much can be accomplished!

Patricia Camilucci
Special Education
IEP Lead Teacher

10 Things on Our Wish List

Parents Wish Teachers Would...

For parents who have children with special needs, the following list reflects their most important wishes.

1. Build students' self-esteem.
2. Become familiar with each child's needs.
3. Communicate honestly and openly with parents.
4. Assign effective homework.
5. Set reasonably high academic needs.
6. Care about children.
7. Be fair.
8. Enforce positive discipline.
9. Use a variety of teaching methods.
10. Encourage parental participation.

Teachers Wish Parents Would...

Teachers also have a wish list of things they feel all parents should do.

1. Be involved in your child's education.
2. Provide resources at home for reading and learning.
3. Set a good example.
4. Encourage your children to do their best in school.
5. Emphasize academics.
6. Support school rules and goals.
7. Use parental pressure positively.
8. Be proactive.
9. Accept parental responsibility.
10. Inform school of situations that may affect school performance.

Websites for Parents & Educators

Rainbow District School Board
<http://www.rainbowschools.ca>

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
www.cec.sped.org

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
<http://ldao.ca>

Ontario Provincial Education Network (OPEN)

To become a member please go to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/tools/eduminister/eng/openlist>

By registering with OPEN, you will receive updates on important education initiatives and may be asked to participate in surveys or asked to provide feedback on education initiatives. If you have further questions or comments please e-mail OPEN at openlist@edu.gov.on.ca

Schwab Learning
www.schwablearning.org

Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW)
<http://snow.utoronto.ca>

Parent's Advocacy in the School
<http://www.parentsadvocacy.com>

Special Education Resources Available Online

► Ministry of Education
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

- Special Education Funding Guidelines: Special Equipment Amount (SEA) and Special Incidence Portion (SIP), 2006-07
- Special Education Transformation: The Report of the Co-Chairs with the Recommendations of the Working Table on Special Education
- Early School Leavers: Understanding the Lived Reality of Student Disengagement from Secondary School
- Planning Entry to School – A Resource Guide
- Education for All: The report of the expert panel on literacy and numeracy instruction for students with special education needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6
- The Individual Education Plan (IEP), A Resource Guide, 2004
- Transition Planning: A Resource Guide, 2002
- Special Education, A Guide for Educators



Barbara Konarek Memorial Award

Dona Aubin, Special Needs Program Leader at Lively District Secondary School, was the 2006 recipient of the Rainbow District School Board's Barbara Konarek Memorial Award. The award recognizes an individual's significant humanitarian contribution to the life of a student or group of students.

"A person who teaches children with special needs possesses a great dedication and soon learns that the job entails much more than 'educating' in the classroom. He/she brings to the situation a sense of caring and sensitivity towards individual differences and strives diligently to empower children to reach their full potential and to be happy."

- Council for Exceptional Children

Local Organizations

The Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada

The Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada is a national voluntary organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for those with or affected by Tourette Syndrome through programs of: education, advocacy, self-help and the promotion of research.

My name is Fiorina Folino and I represent the Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada. I am a mother of a child who has a severe case of Tourette Syndrome, and that also requires special education support. I make all the voices of children with Tourette Syndrome heard when it comes to getting them an education with the support and understanding of all those involved with these children. When there are issues or a decision to be made with any aspect of the special education system, I advocate for these children, so that their needs will be considered.

If there is a child that has been diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome or you suspect that a child has it and you would like to get information please feel free to contact me at the following numbers. I also do in-services (presentations). If you would like me to do a presentation to students or teachers about Tourette Syndrome please give me a call. You can also get very helpful information at The Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada (TSFC) website <http://www.tourette.ca/>

Sudbury & Northern Ontario

Contact Representative: Fiorina Folino
Phone: 1-705-523-2242
E-mail: folinof@ontera.net

Council for Exceptional Children

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or giftedness. CEC's specialized divisions provide additional focus and depth of information to a particular exceptionality or interest area in special education. Each year, CEC hosts a number of local, provincial, and international conferences and conventions, which provide stellar professional development opportunities. Local contact in Sudbury is Jodi Gibbons at 523-1199.

Ontario Provincial Conference 2006 50th Anniversary Celebration November 9 - 11 Sheraton Parkway, Richmond Hill, ON

Should you require additional information, kindly contact:

Cindy Perras
 Special Programs Department
 Peel District School Board
 5650 Hurontario Street
 Mississauga, ON L5R 1C6
 905-890-1010 ext. 2140 (voice mail), 905-890-1280 (fax)
 cindy.perras@peelsb.com
<http://qps.peelschools.org/cec-2006>

Canadian National Institute for the Blind

CNIB/IEWS Parent Support Group Meetings

Location: CNIB
 303 York St.
 Sudbury, ON
 2nd floor group room

Time: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Dates: September 13, 2006
 October 11, 2006
 November 8, 2006
 January 10, 2007
 April 11, 2007
 May 9, 2007
 (2nd Wednesday of most months)

All parents/guardians of children with a visual impairment or blindness are welcome to join us.

For more information please contact:
 Deb Barclay at 522-4415

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Parent Support Group 2006-2007

Are you the parent/guardian of a child with AD/HD? If so, you may be interested in joining our support group. We meet at Laurentian Hospital's 3rd floor classroom (3A) at 7 p.m.

September 11th – Getting to know you
 September 25th – Handouts
 October 2nd – Video
 October 23rd – Video
 November 6th – Video/Speaker
 November 20th – Group Discussion
 December 4th – Video/Speaker
 December 18th – Video/Speaker
 January 8th – Video/Speaker
 January 22nd – Group Discussion
 February 5th – Video/Speaker
 February 19th – Video/Speaker
 March 5th – Video/Speaker
 March 19th – Group Discussion
 April 9th – Video/Speaker
 April 23rd – Group Discussion
 May 7th – Getting Ready for Summer

Contact Sadie at 523-4747

ADD/ADHD PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Laurentian Hospital
41 Ramsey Lake Road
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 2R1
(ph: 523-4747) – Sadie Marr

AUTISM SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

(Sudbury and District)
225 Riverside Drive
Sudbury, Ontario , P3E 1H4
(ph: 688-9303)

CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

(Sudbury and District B)
2141 Lasalle Blvd, Unit F
Sudbury ON P3A 2A3
(ph: 670-1993)

CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY (SUDBURY)

1233 Paris Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 3B6
(ph: 523-5695)

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

111 Elm Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 1T3
(ph: 675-7252)

THE CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

303 York Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 2A5
(ph: 675-2468)

CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

245 Mountain Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 2T8
(ph: 674-1451)

COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (Sudbury Chapter)

c/o K. Taylor Horeck
165A D'Youville Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3C 5E7
(ph: 673-5620)

COMMUNITY LIVING GREATER SUDBURY

Plaza North-Box 2, 4544 Highway 69N
Val Therese, Ontario, P3P 1P9
(PH: 969-4986)

DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF SUDBURY

P.O. Box 2855, Station "A" Sudbury,
Ontario, P3A 5J3
(ph: 673-8303)

EPILEPSY SUDBURY-MANITOULIN

303 York Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 2A5
(ph: 688-0188)

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF SUDBURY

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 21038, Plaza 69
Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 6G6
(ph: 522-0100)
www.ldasudbury.ca

PARENTS ASSOCIATION FOR THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

1204 St. Jerome Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3A 2V9
(ph: 560-8000)

TOURETTE'S ASSOCIATION Sudbury

192 Eugene Street
Sudbury, Ontario, P3B 3S7
(ph: 524-0734)



Return to:
Rainbow District School Board
Attention: SEAC
69 Young Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3G5
Fax: (705) 674-3167

FEEDBACK FORM

We encourage you to send us comments on any aspect of our special education programs and our SEAC Newsletter content.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRODUCED BY THE RAINBOW DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD'S SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF SUDBURY.

Produced and edited by:
Jennifer Dolson (Resource Facilitator, LDAS) & Stephanie Blakely (Community Outreach Officer, LDAS)





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A message from the SEAC Chair

Special Education programs & services in the Sudbury Catholic District School Board reflect the individual needs of our students. We are committed to providing the kind of environment that allows all students to continually grow physically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially. SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee) has worked towards the goal of strengthening parent involvement. In May of this year, a workshop was held at the Catholic Education Centre with the Learning Disabilities Association. This parent advocacy workshop brought parents and educators together to support our students with special needs.

We will continue to bring workshops to parents that are not only informative but provide parents with a vehicle to be active and involved in the education of their children. SEAC will continue to work diligently to serve the needs of exceptional students and their families.

Fiorina Folino
Chairperson, SEAC

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SEAC meetings

SEAC meetings are held regularly at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of alternate months. The meetings are held at the Catholic Education Centre at 165A D'Youville Street. Meetings are open to the public. For further information phone Rossella Bagnato at (705) 673-5620 ext. 300. We welcome your attendance or written input.

Meet Your SEAC Members

TRUSTEE Roberte Cunningham Trustee, Chairperson SEAC of the Board
 Barry MacDonald (alternate) Trustee

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Lois Keenan Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury
Wendy Larouche (alternate) Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury
Chalita DeGiosa Down Syndrome Association of Sudbury
Susan Waern Parents Association for the Physically Challenged

Fiorina Folino Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada
Mary Tremblay ADD/HD Parent Support Group
Debbie Hawes (alternate) ADD/HD Parent Support Group

BOARD PERSONNEL

Zandra Zubac Director of Education
Rossella Bagnato Superintendent of Academic Services
Lydia Sapia Special Education Coordinator

A message from the Trustee Representative

The Sudbury Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee works to be a resource for parents of exceptional pupils. I wish to thank the members for all their hard work over the past year.

SEAC's commitment to acquire a strong working knowledge of programs and services within the board has brought many exciting professional development opportunities. The CODE (Council of Ontario Directors of Education) Special Education Project involved the use of laptops with our special education students. Computer Technology has provided our students with a powerful method to demonstrate learning. Our teachers have been very diligent in encouraging our students to use a variety of technologies to ensure the best possible student outcomes.

I look forward again to another fruitful year, and encourage all of our parents to be involved in their child's education.

Roberte Cunningham
Trustee Representative, SEAC

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St. Benedict - Success Story

St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School has a population of 650 students, of whom approximately 23 percent are identified as having special needs. Now in its 12th year, the school offers a wide variety of programming, including French Immersion, locally developed and not-for-credit courses.

The school's success rate for students writing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test for the first time rose from 80 percent in February 2002 to 92 percent in March 2006.

We have focused on building capacity within our own school community. Our cross-curricular team had three main goals: impress upon staff that literacy is not only the job of the language arts teachers, but the responsibility of all teachers; share with teachers effective literacy implementation strategies and show them how they can fit nicely into their curriculum; and introduce a resource binder of subject-specific literacy activities.

- Guy Mathieu, Principal



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By Diane Wagner and Carter Hammett
Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario

Faith at the Sudbury Catholic District School Board

Our schools incorporate Catholic beliefs throughout all subject areas of the curriculum. Both individually and as members of interdependent teams, students are called to examine and evaluate their own contributions to physical, political, ethical, socioeconomic and ecological systems with an informed moral conscience as they learn to integrate faith with life.

We invite you to visit the “Way to Go” and “Community” sections of our website for a selection of news items that frequently focus on the accomplishments of our students and staff as they demonstrate their spirit and living faith, and truly “Make a Difference.”



We Work to Serve You Better

Our academic services team includes:

- academic services coordinator
- psychometrists
- speech/language pathologist
- communication disorder assistants
- counsellor
- itinerant teachers

This team of professionals work in close cooperation with the community, schools, parents, personnel, curriculum coordinators, superintendents, and all pertinent community agencies to help satisfy the particular needs of exceptional pupils.

Special Education: What's in the News at the Sudbury Catholic District School Board

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Chair, Sudbury Catholic District School Board

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Teachers also have a wish list of things they feel all parents should do.

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9. Accept parental responsibility.
10. Inform school of situations that may affect school performance.

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Local Organizations

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The Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada is a national voluntary organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for those with or affected by Tourette Syndrome through programs of: education, advocacy, self-help and the promotion of research.

My name is Fiorina Folino and I represent the Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada. I am a mother of a child who has a severe case of Tourette Syndrome, and that also requires special education support. I make all the voices of children with Tourette Syndrome heard when it comes to getting them an education with the support and understanding of all those involved with these children. When there are issues or a decision to be made with any aspect of the special education system, I advocate for these children, so that their needs will be considered.

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Sudbury & Northern Ontario

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 2nd floor group room

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For more information please contact:
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Cindy Perras
 Special Programs Department
 Peel District School Board
 5650 Hurontario Street
 Mississauga, ON L5R 1C6
 905-890-1010 ext. 2140 (voice mail), 905-890-1280 (fax)
cindy.perras@peelsb.com
<http://qps.peelschools.org/cec-2006>

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 April 9th – Video/Speaker
 April 23rd – Group Discussion
 May 7th – Getting Ready for Summer

Contact Sadie at 523-4747



Welcome to the first edition of SEAC NEWS. This newsletter will be published twice a year to keep you informed and updated on the topic of Special Education at the Sudbury Catholic District School Board.

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A message from the SEAC Chair

Special Education programs & services in the Sudbury Catholic District School Board reflect the individual needs of our students. We are committed to providing the kind of environment that allows all students to continually grow physically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially. SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee) has worked towards the goal of strengthening parent involvement. In May of this year, a workshop was held at the Catholic Education Centre with the Learning Disabilities Association. This parent advocacy workshop brought parents and educators together to support our students with special needs.

We will continue to bring workshops to parents that are not only informative but provide parents with a vehicle to be active and involved in the education of their children. SEAC will continue to work diligently to serve the needs of exceptional students and their families.

Fiorina Folino
Chairperson, SEAC

What is SEAC?

SEAC is a Special Education Advisory Committee. SEAC Committees are mandated in Ontario in Regulation number 464/97 under the Education Act.

The Special Education Advisory Committee

- makes recommendations to the board in respect to any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the board;
- participates in the board's annual review of its special education plan;
- participates in the board's annual budget process as it relates to special education;
- reviews the financial statements of the board as they relate to special education;
- provides information to parents.

SEAC meetings

SEAC meetings are held regularly at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of alternate months. The meetings are held at the Catholic Education Centre at 165A D'Youville Street. Meetings are open to the public. For further information phone Rossella Bagnato at (705) 673-5620 ext. 300. We welcome your attendance or written input.

Meet Your SEAC Members

TRUSTEE Roberte Cunningham Trustee, Chairperson SEAC of the Board
 Barry MacDonald (alternate) Trustee

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Lois Keenan Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury
Wendy Larouche (alternate) Learning Disabilities Association of Sudbury
Chalita DeGiosa Down Syndrome Association of Sudbury
Susan Waern Parents Association for the Physically Challenged

Fiorina Folino Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada
Mary Tremblay ADD/HD Parent Support Group
Debbie Hawes (alternate) ADD/HD Parent Support Group

BOARD PERSONNEL

Zandra Zubac Director of Education
Rossella Bagnato Superintendent of Academic Services
Lydia Sapia Special Education Coordinator

A message from the Trustee Representative

The Sudbury Catholic District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee works to be a resource for parents of exceptional pupils. I wish to thank the members for all their hard work over the past year.

SEAC's commitment to acquire a strong working knowledge of programs and services within the board has brought many exciting professional development opportunities. The CODE (Council of Ontario Directors of Education) Special Education Project involved the use of laptops with our special education students. Computer Technology has provided our students with a powerful method to demonstrate learning. Our teachers have been very diligent in encouraging our students to use a variety of technologies to ensure the best possible student outcomes.

I look forward again to another fruitful year, and encourage all of our parents to be involved in their child's education.

Roberte Cunningham
Trustee Representative, SEAC

"Special education cannot be defined in a single statement. It is a process, a journey that takes different shapes for different students at different times in their educational careers. An IEP provides the roadmap for the completion of that journey."

Individual Education Plans

What is an IEP?

An IEP is...

- a written plan describing the special education program and/or services required by a particular student, based on a thorough assessment of the student's strengths and needs – that is, the strengths and needs that affect the student's ability to learn and to demonstrate learning;
- a record of the particular accommodations needed to help the student achieve his or her learning expectations, given the student's identified learning strengths and needs;
- a working document that identifies learning expectations that are modified from the expectations for the age-appropriate grade level in a particular subject or course, as outlined in the Ministry of Education's curriculum policy documents;
- a working document that identifies alternative expectations, if required, in program areas not represented in the Ontario curriculum;
- a record of the specific knowledge and skills to be assessed and evaluated for the purpose of reporting student achievement of modified and/or alternative expectations;
- an accountability tool for the student, the student's parents, and everyone who has responsibilities under the plan for helping the student meet the stated goals and learning expectations as the student progresses through the Ontario curriculum.

An IEP is not...

- a description of everything that will be taught to the student;
- a list of all the teaching strategies used in regular classroom instruction;
- a document that records all learning expectations, including those that are not modified from the regular grade level curriculum expectations;
- a daily lesson plan.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP). A Resource Guide, 2004. The Ontario Ministry of Education.

St. Benedict - Success Story

St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School has a population of 650 students, of whom approximately 23 percent are identified as having special needs. Now in its 12th year, the school offers a wide variety of programming, including French Immersion, locally developed and not-for-credit courses.

The school's success rate for students writing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test for the first time rose from 80 percent in February 2002 to 92 percent in March 2006.

We have focused on building capacity within our own school community. Our cross-curricular team had three main goals: impress upon staff that literacy is not only the job of the language arts teachers, but the responsibility of all teachers; share with teachers effective literacy implementation strategies and show them how they can fit nicely into their curriculum; and introduce a resource binder of subject-specific literacy activities.

- Guy Mathieu, Principal



The IEP: How Parents Can Help

- ✓ Communicate regularly with the student's teacher and attend meetings.
- ✓ Keep records of information that may be helpful, especially meetings or discussions that may have taken place outside the school.
- ✓ Share insights about the student's likes, dislikes, relevant medical information and assessments the school may not have.
- ✓ Ask questions. Clarify definitions, jargon, and the roles of those participating. Ask for an explanation of procedural issues that are unclear.
- ✓ Assume the best. Professionals share your goal to develop your child's full potential.

- Weber & Bennett, Special Education in Ontario Schools (5th edition) 2004

Individual Education Plans: A Lesson in Partnership

Every student in the publicly-funded school system who receives special education services must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Each IEP is a truly *individualized* document because it is designed for that student, and that student alone. The IEP process creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to increase the chances for academic success. The IEP can be a testament of quality education for students with special education needs.

Information gathering for the IEP should include a review of the student's records (e.g. IPRC statements of decisions and recommendations), relevant assessment data, consultations with school personnel and other professionals, and any information gained through observation of the student. Consultations with parents and students are an important part of the process.

The Ministry of Education recommends a collaborative team approach, where information on a student's strengths and needs can be shared, and plans can be made on teaching strategies, accommodations, technology supports, and assessment techniques. Parents and students 16 and over must be consulted on the development of the IEP, and sign a form to affirm they were consulted in the development process.

The principal must see that the IEP is complete, that copies are sent to the parents and student (if 16 or older), and that all relevant school personnel are aware of the IEP's content. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the IEP is implemented. However, parents also need to check that all teachers are aware of and understand the contents of the IEP. Parents and students should collaborate with teachers to make sure the provisions are implemented. If students themselves understand and accept the IEP provisions, this can go a long way toward successful implementation.

The IEP must be reviewed and learning expectations updated at least once in every reporting period (i.e. each term where there is a report card). According to The IEP Resource Guide (2004), "If certain strategies cease to be effective, it is imperative that the staff working with the student seek out and implement new teaching methods and accommodations". Once again, parents and students are to be consulted if there are significant changes to the student's learning expectations or accommodations.

In 2000 the Ministry of Education issued standards for Development, Program Planning and Implementation of IEPs. Between 2001 and 2003, the Ministry conducted reviews of IEPs prepared by school boards across Ontario. On the basis of information gathered through these reviews, and consultations with educators and parents, a revised IEP Resource Guide was published in 2004.

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