

TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2022

Public Session: 5:30 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

D. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. DSBN Summer Learning Programs**
Mary Anne Gage, Leanne Smith, Mike St. John
- 2. Environmental Education in DSBN**
Marian Reimer Friesen, Ann Gilmore

E. OTHER BUSINESS

F. ADJOURNMENT

G. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, June 7 at 5:30 p.m.

DSBN Summer Learning Programs

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BACKGROUND:

The DSBN values the learning opportunities the Summer Learning programs provide for students and recognizes the important role these play in supporting student achievement. This year, we will deliver Summer Learning programs for students from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12, including Adult learners. All Summer Learning programs will provide valuable learning opportunities for students and will focus on learning renewal in preparation for a strong transition in September.

SUMMER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Senior Kindergarten through Grade 4 – Summer HEAT

The goal of the Summer HEAT program is to continue to develop literacy and numeracy skills to support students for success in September. This year we are hosting Summer HEAT at twelve sites. The program will run July 4th through July 22nd, from 8:30 – 12:15. Registration is invitational to ensure this experience is available to students from identified focus schools who would benefit most from this learning.

Each year we provide specialized programming at designated Indigenous Summer HEAT sites. Last July we introduced a highly successful Mohawk language component as an addition to this program. Feedback from students, parents and staff was extremely positive. In collaboration with community, we will again hire teachers who are Mohawk language speakers to help facilitate an introduction to the language and culture through mini-lessons, games, art, etc.

We continue to value the partnerships with community agencies such as Niagara Nutrition Partners, Home Depot and Niagara Parks Conservation Authority that provide a wide range of engaging activities and supports for students. New this year, we are partnering with Brock University and Niagara College to hire students from the education programs to support at all Summer Heat sites as tutors in the classroom. We know these partnerships will truly enhance the Summer HEAT experience.

Junior and Intermediate Students

We are pleased to offer programs to support students entering grades five through grade 8 to further develop literacy, numeracy, and technology skills through project-based learning. This summer learning experience is a non-credit program. The programs are 3 weeks in duration and are offered both in-person and virtually to DSBN students. These programs will run from July 4th through July 22nd, from 8:30 - 2:30.

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Secondary (Grade 7-12, Adult)

This summer we are returning to one secondary summer school session: July 4 – July 29. Our two main sites are Sir Winston Churchill and A.N. Myer Secondary School. For secondary credit courses, students have a choice to register for in-person or eLearning courses. A full breadth of programming and courses are available including new credits, credit recovery, bootcamp, cooperative learning, English as a Second Language, and Summer Link (Dual Credits with Niagara College). There are also adult programs available to earn secondary school credits, including a summer entry PSW program. Reach ahead programs, for students finishing grade 7 or 8, are also available at many smaller locations to provide equitable opportunities for all DSBN students. Reach ahead credits, with the exception of careers and civics, will only be offered in-person to assist in transitioning students to in-person learning in September. Reach ahead opportunities include: Integrated Arts, Intro to Culinary, Health & Physical Education, Intro to Technology, and Skills for Success.

Student success supports are available in summer school. These include student success teachers, EA's, food technicians, and tutors to support students in eLearning courses and in the classroom.

Special Education

The DSBN Special Education team, in collaboration with the Curriculum Department, will be offering elementary and secondary summer programs in-person that focus on transitions, social skills, and technology for students with special learning needs, supported by a variety of Special Education staff and educational partnerships. Transition programs will be offered by DSBN Special Education staff with community partners that will support students as they prepare for the upcoming school year.

Students with special learning needs will be supported through a variety of programs. DSBN Special Education staff will provide programs that focus on the development of social skills through play, problem-solving, movement and sensory opportunities. Students will have access to inclusive programming that supports building independence, self-advocacy, while enhancing literacy learning. All special education programs will provide important support and continuation of learning for students in the development of social, communication, literacy, numeracy, and technology skills to prepare for September.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The Mental Health and Well-Being team will be offering continued elementary and secondary summer mental health support and programming for students and families. DSBN social workers will provide continued individual student/family intervention and group programming for students with attendance concerns. Students and families with significant attendance concerns will receive in-person support from a DSBN attendance counsellor two weeks prior to the start of school in September. DSBN youth counsellors will provide social emotional learning

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program support to Summer HEAT, as well as a Social-Emotional Learning Program, Merrell's Strong Start, Merrell's Strong Kids, or Merrell's Strong Teens, open for registration through the DSBN website. Students will have opportunities to develop social, emotional, resiliency, coping, and communication skills.

SUMMARY:

Summer learning programs continue to build important social, literacy and numeracy skills, provide opportunity for many students to reach ahead with secondary credits and prepare all students for a return to in-person learning in September.

Respectfully submitted by:

Mary Anne Gage - Superintendent of Education, Elementary, Area 4

Leanne Smith – Superintendent of Education, Secondary Curriculum and Student Achievement

Michael St. John – Superintendent of Special Education and Mental Health and Well-Being

Environmental Education in DSBN

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BACKGROUND:

The District School Board of Niagara recognizes the need for all students to learn about the environment. Environmental education expectations and concepts are woven throughout the K-12 curriculum and are a core component of both the newly released Elementary Science and Technology Curriculum and Secondary Science Curriculum. This is captured well in the new Grade 9 Science course document where it says:

“Concepts and skills related to environmental education appear throughout the curriculum, providing students with opportunities to investigate the world around them and to build the skills and knowledge that serve as the foundation for deep understanding about complex and interconnected issues such as dynamic equilibrium, biodiversity, sustainability, and climate change. Learning in all strands is enriched when students think critically about environmental issues when relating science to society, or when developing innovative solutions through a scientific or engineering design process.”

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Curriculum Overview: Elementary

In the elementary curriculum, most of the expectations connected explicitly with environmental education, are found in the Science and Technology Curriculum, however, there are references to learning about the natural world across all subjects.

- For example, there are over 50 expectations in the Grade 1 curriculum that integrate environmental knowledge and advocacy.
- Sample Grade 5 Expectation: Relating Science and Technology to Society and the Environment - “Assess the effects of social and environmental factors on human health and propose ways in which individuals can reduce the harmful effects of these factors and take advantage of those that are beneficial.”
- In addition to existing Earth Week activities, Curriculum Support Services (CSS) staff are currently developing inquiry and curriculum based environmental mini units for each grade.

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- Professional Development for implementing the new Science Curriculum for Fall 2022 will continue to include a significant environmental education component.

In addition to the Science Curriculum, the Ministry of Education has provided an Environmental Education Scope and Sequence which supports teachers in making connections between environmental topics or issues and other curriculum areas. All our elementary educators are committed to integrating environmental education into their programs.

Curriculum Overview: Secondary

Elements of environmental awareness, advocacy, issues, and sustainability continue in secondary but become more specific as students are able to choose focus-courses where they can deepen their understanding.

Geography Curriculum:

- Through geographic inquiry, students develop an understanding of the physical environment and the importance of managing Canada's natural resources and maintaining livable communities.

Science Curriculum:

- Concepts and skills related to environmental education appear throughout the curriculum, providing students with opportunities to investigate the world around them and to build the skills and knowledge that serve as the foundation for deep understanding about complex and interconnected issues such as dynamic equilibrium, biodiversity, sustainability, and climate change.

Specialist High Skill Majors (SHSM) Opportunities:

- Students in grades 11 & 12 have opportunity to focus their studies in SHSM programs with a focus on Environmental, Horticulture and Landscaping, or Energy sectors. Each of these SHSM programs have a focus on the environment, conservation, and renewable resources.

Indigenous Education

- Indigenous perspectives and worldviews related to the environment are woven through all curriculum areas. The Indigenous education team works to embed Indigenous content and learning across the curriculum. For example, in "Environmental Science" (SVN 3M/E) students travel to Balls Falls with an Indigenous community member to support the learning of the Indigenous Ways of Knowing Nature, Water Quality and Invasive Species programming.

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Extra-curricular Opportunities

While the curriculum plays an important role in developing students to be environmentally aware and responsible citizens, DSBN recognizes that allowing students to take their learning beyond the curriculum is of equal importance. This is demonstrated in the opportunities that students have from K-12 through extracurricular activities, field trips, access to Outdoor Education, clubs and activities related to the environment. It's also demonstrated in the many student-led environmental initiatives and projects happening in DSBN.

- All Secondary schools and over 65% of Elementary schools have formal environmental clubs or groups in place. Examples of extracurricular environmental clubs and groups are: Recycling Team, Environmental Club, Greenhouse Club, Great Lakes Watershed Cleanup Team, Community Cleanup Club, Envirothon, Eco Club, Green Team, Composting Team, EcoSchools, and Gardening Club.
- Students have opportunities throughout the grades to access the DSBN outdoor campuses. This allows them to explore, investigate and appreciate nature via the curriculum.
- Experiential learning opportunities in the form of field trips to conservation areas and around their local community allow for additional opportunities for students to apply and demonstrate their knowledge of environmental systems, issues, and human impact.
- Over half of DSBN elementary schools have already created a Kindergarten outdoor learning space or multi-grade outdoor classrooms. Several more are in the beginning stages of working with CSS and Facilities Department to create these spaces.
- All Secondary schools and 42 Elementary schools have Nutri Towers with more being added regularly. These promote plant research throughout the school year.
- Earth Day celebrations in elementary and secondary schools generate enthusiasm and ideas for future school-based initiatives.

We are very appreciative of our staff who volunteer their time to lead extra-curricular activities, and inspired by our students whose interest in environmental protection and advocacy fuel our initiatives.

SUMMARY:

The DSBN is committed to environmental education. Empowering educators and students to pursue school-based issues and initiatives, both through the curriculum and extracurricular activities, provides opportunities for authentic learning. The CSS team supports the work through a variety of resources for staff and students K-12, to ensure students are equipped

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with the knowledge and competencies required to be environmental stewards for life. As with any global issue, context will always evolve, and our actions must do the same. DSBN has built capacity in developing both student and staff environmental leaders who will continue to inspire others in DSBN to take action to protect the environment.

Respectfully submitted by:

Marian Reimer Friesen, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement, Elementary
Ann Gilmore, Superintendent of Curriculum & Student Achievement, Secondary