GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
REPORT OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, November 11, 2014 at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

- Beverly Clarke, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
- JoAnn Percy - Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
- Connie Buckler - Trustee
- Karen Wilson - Parents for Children’s Mental Health via teleconference
- David Kerr, Canadian Hearing Society
- Cheryl Lovell – Trustee Alternate
- Susan Smith, Association for Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)
- Mary MacLauchlan - Autism Ontario (Windsor-Essex)
- Monica Gilles – Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association

BOARD PERSONNEL:

- Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent of Special Education
- Vicki Houston – Principal Special Education Programs and Services
- Jackie Connelly – OPC Elementary Representative
- Melissa MacIntyre – OPC Secondary Representative

REGRETS:

- Gale Simko-Hatfield – Trustee
- Paula Rankin - VIEWS
- Sabrina East - Voice for Hearing Impaired Children

ABSENT:

- Jodi Lowrie, CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind) – Essex-Kent District
- David Lenz – Easter Seals Ontario, Windsor Essex

Recorder: Marion Goyette

1. Call to Order
C. Buckler called the meeting to order at 1:05pm.

2. Attendance
C. Buckler gave regrets on behalf of Sabrina East, VOICE and Gale Simko-Hatfield, Trustee. Noted absences were Easter Seals Windsor Essex and CNIB.

3. Approval of Agenda
   Moved by: M. MacLauchlan
Seconded by: D. Kerr
That SEAC approve the agenda for November 11, 2014.

CARRIED.

4. Approval of Minutes
Changes requested:
At the bottom of page 3 the paragraph started K. Wilson asked if the point...
Change to:
K. Wilson questioned that primary and junior elementary teachers are expected to be experts in, and prepare 6 subject lesson plans a day, and wouldn't it make more sense to have "expert teachers" in the core subjects who would only teach that subject and adopt a rotary cycle similar to the intermediate classes."
C. Buckler stated that the Trustees have asked similar questions at board meetings.

Moved by: C. Lovell
Seconded by: M. MacLauchlan
That SEAC approve the minutes of the SEAC meeting of October 14, 2014 with the amendment.

CARRIED.

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes
M. MacLauchlan asked if Tim McCarthy had a Mental Health portion in his FBA Training. V. Houston reported on his behalf that there was nothing in depth but will consider including in future training.

6. Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)
Dan Fister, Superintendent of Education and Charysse Pawley, Supervisor of Social Work presented on the SAL Program.
SAL Program:
• The goal is to re-engage compulsory school aged students (ages 14-17) with significant attendance issues
• It is offered after other retention strategies have not proven successful
• Students excused from full-time attendance by SAL Committee participate in one(1) or more approved activities:
  • Credit or non-credit courses
  • Training, employment, volunteering
  • Counselling, other approved activities
• Students follow a learning plan that is regularly monitored
• Disclosures signed for SAL monitoring purposes
• At any time a student on SAL can return to school. There is always transition planning
• Students on SAL can request LST support
• Some student are going to school full time and working after school because they are providers for their family. They need to have choices other than quitting school.
• If students come to SAL with credits already and have a part time job they can earn and learn.
Questions/Discussion:
The vast majority of SAL participants are from the Leamington and Kingsville area. SAL applications are
done through the principal. Principals try to keep student with learning disabilities in school for the
available supports. Students must have a credit course they can link to the job. That is why they are
sometimes encouraged to take an Independent Learning Course. D. Fister stated he will work on
informing the schools on the benefits of the SAL program for certain students. If students have
exhausted all possibilities and are having difficulty getting in to the SAL program they can contact the
Board Office.

7. Mental Health
Sharon Pyke, Superintendent, presented on the Mental Health Strategic Plan. S. Pyke is the Mental
Health Lead for the board. She is the only Superintendent as lead in the province. The Ministry had
cconcerns at first but now they are saying that our program is covered from the top down and are
quicker to get things done.

Five year plan to be completed in 2018:

- Reduce the stigma associated with mental illness
- To promote mental health, wellness, and well-being
- To deepen our relationships with community partners on pathways to care
- To develop a school board understanding of mental health literacy
- To continue to build timely and school-ready resources for staff members
- To establish a foundation with resilience as a focus

It was decided to create a steering committee responsible to obtain these goals. Mental health minutes
are being sent out to every employee in the system weekly. These contain tips and information for
mental health. The mental health nurses are in 4 schools and by the end of the year they will be in 7.
The nurses support and encourage students and help connect students to the resources they need.

8. Special Education Update

STEPS and GAINS
V. Houston informed the committee that the board is creating a list of Look Fors for STEPS and GAINS
Administrators go through classrooms and what discuss what it should look like and help identify where
more resources are needed. We will be taking the best practices and implementing it across the system.

RSEC
L. McLaughlin and V. Houston attended RSEC. Barry Findlay provided provincial statistics on EQAO and
special education. M. Goyette will send out the slides he presented.

GECDSB Special Education Numbers
Numbers of exceptionalities and placements within the board will be provided at the December meeting
once OnSIS is finished.

Special Needs Strategy
L. McLaughlin informed the committee that the board is meeting with community partners. The goals
are: how to integrate delivery of rehabilitation services; and coordinated service programming. There
is a Developmental Screen being developed so we will be better able to identify needs and provide
support for pre-school children. This strategy is a joint effort between the Ministry of Children and
Youth Services, Ministry of Community and Social Services, and the Ministry of Education. There will be a Special Needs Strategy Report on each agenda to keep the committee updated.  

**SEAC Term for 2014-2018**  
L. McLaughlin thanked those who have submitted applications for the new term. These applications will now go to the Director and a recommendation will go to the Board. Once the applications are accepted by the Board of Trustees letters will be sent to the organizations.

V. Houston updated the committee that Dr. Shankar will not presenting on the 21st to Board staff as previously shared. The City of Windsor presentation for the public is still on  
C. Buckler stated that she is disappointed that there is no plan from the Ministry of Education for kindergarten supports. There is no funding for supports or any mechanisms in place but many issues that need addressing. L. McLaughlin replied that this is common across all boards. Self-Regulation is key but some children have not met this developmental milestone. V. Houston stated that the Ministry has asked board to send in the numbers of extra support staff hired for new kindergarten students requiring support.  
Thames Valley now as a local and more accessible location in the city for families.

9. **New Business**  
There was no new Business

10. **Association Reports**  

**Autism Ontario**  
During provincial training last month, we had sessions regarding SEAC & issues other chapters are experiencing. Our board is very proactive in many of the issues brought up. For several years now we have used communication books, created behaviour & safety plans before major incidents occur, IPRC & IEP meetings occur on time & when requested, & extensive implementation with PPM140 (annual review, ABA methods used, transition plans, & Functional Behaviour Analysis).  
Our SEAC meetings are well run, agenda’s provided ahead of time & most importantly questions from associations were answered in a timely fashion. Kudos to Lynn & Vicki for setting such high standards.  
Our chapter is currently running multiple classes for kids/teens & adults of varied abilities, our fundraiser at Komedy Korner was a success & our upcoming Christmas party is November 23rd which is free to all members, their immediate family as well as a worker to attend.  
Please see our website for more details [www.autismontario.ca](http://www.autismontario.ca)

**Community Living Windsor-Essex**  
The organization was going to have their SEAC training but due to low registration they are moving it to next February.

**Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association**  
The annual Christmas Party for the families is Nov 30th at Emeryville Knights of Columbus. The Organization will be at Anderdon Public School on Thursday for the book launch of A B C D is for Down. They have also presented at the WECDSB.

**Canadian Hearing Society**  
No report.
Home and School Association
Their meeting was held last Monday. They are planning a trip to a restaurant after the next meeting as a small outing.

LDAO
LDAO is going to start offering PA Day enrichment camps. They have found the students want to do movies so one component of the camp is to create movie. The first camp is November 21st.

Trustees
C. Buckler said the Organization of the Board meeting is December 2nd at 7:00pm. This will be the last her meeting for her as Chair. Her goal is to stay as Trustee representative.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30.

Connie Buckler, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee