

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, December 8, 2020** via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Aimee Omstead, Trustee
Cathy Cooke, Trustee
Suzanne Kovach, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Sheila Ruggaber, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario
Martha Vukov, Community Living Windsor-Essex County
Jan Matte-Gasparovic, Autism Ontario
Bette Turner, Home and School Instruction
Monica Gilles, Windsor-Essex County Down Syndrome Association

BOARD PERSONNEL

Mike Wilcox, Superintendent of Special Education Services
Kristie Sweet, Supervising Principal of Special Education Services

REGRETS

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Kimberly John, Indigenous Community Representative
Michelle Lowes, OPC Elementary Representative
Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary Representative

ABSENT

RECORDER

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:28 pm. due to technical difficulties.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: B. Turner

Seconded by: J. Matte-Gasparovic

That SEAC approve the agenda for December 8, 2020.

The motion was carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: S. Ruggaber

Seconded by: C. Cooke

That SEAC approve the Minutes for November 10 2020.

The motion was carried.

4. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

M. Matte-Gasparovic had a question regarding the *My Way* presentation from the November 2020 SEAC meeting. She asked how non-verbal students communicate "My Way". K. Sweet responded that the team decides on an appropriate response for the students (e.g. double-tap

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with hand, thumbs up for O.K.). The skill level of the student will determine how they demonstrate MyWay.

5. Update on Speech and Language/Psychological Services – Dr. M. Crundwell

Psychological Services staff continue to run and offer all services that were offered in previous years. Staff work on a two-week schedule. One week in school with students (attending only two schools per week) and consultation with staff. The second week is used for virtual consultations, preparing for assessments, sending out questionnaires, and doing feedback. We currently have 153 assessment started or consent has been signed. 45 are completed so far. There have been 275 students assessed so far this year. The Psychology staff ask schools to not adjust the priority list based on the cohort that students are in. We are offering in-person assessments, using required PPE. Space has been rented to accommodate social distancing for students in cohorts C and D, for parents who are uncomfortable bringing their child into the school. Virtual assessments are also being done and we have purchased resources needed to complete these assessments. There are currently 8.5 Psychologists plus Dr. Crundwell who also services two schools.

The Board has 9.0 Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs). The SLPs are on a three-week rotation. The first two weeks, they are at schools, consulting with teachers and administrators, completing assessments and providing direct intervention for students (usually for early years and gr. 1). They also do small group interventions. The Board also has 1.5 Communicative Disorder Associates (CDAs) who go to two schools per week to provide individual and small group interventions. The CDAs are supervised by an SLP. Week three is for office time, writing reports, contacting parents, and for virtual assessments and interventions. Thera Platform, which is aimed to help students with their articulation, receptive and expressive language, auditory processing, reading, cognition and problem solving, and social skills, will be used for virtual consultation in January 2021. Currently, our SLPs and CDAs are providing services to 954 students in all cohorts within our Board.

6. Special Education Updates

Special Education Department “On Demand” Professional Development

- Using Context for Learning in RISE Math Class
- New to RISE with an Experienced RISE Teacher
- Positive Behaviour Supports in the Classroom
- QR Codes/Portfolios
- Let’s Make that Digital
- Introduction to Boardmaker 7

Our Educational Coordinators developed a series of webinars to build capacity for teachers in the event they have to pivot to remote learning. These webinars were developed for our Learning Support Teachers, Rise Teachers, GAINS Teachers, STEPS Teachers, and Education Support Staff were also able to attend. These webinars have included topics such as:

- Introduction to Microsoft Teams
- Features within Teams such as Class Notebook and Staff Notebook
- Resources and Activities that can be used to teach remotely
- What a typical school day would look like in the virtual classroom
- How to conduct a virtual field trip and invite the family along
- How to use the Diagnostic Reading Assessment virtually

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Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding for 2020

- The Special Incidence Portion (SIP) is one of the six allocations that make up the Special Education Grant, which is part of the Grants for Student Needs. SIP is intended to support students with extraordinarily high needs who require more than two full-time staff to address their health and/or safety needs, and those of others at their school.
- In previous years, the SIP allocation has been based on claims submitted by school boards. For the 2020-2021 school year, regulatory amendments to Ontario Regulation 489/20 will not allocate 2020-2021 SIP funding through a temporary formula-based mechanism rather than through the existing claims process.
- These amendments will provide school boards with a 2020-2021 starting SIP allocation based on the highest amount of either:
 - Their 2019-2020 SIP funding allocation
 - An average of the previous three years (2016-2017 to 2018-2019)
- A growth rate of 5% will also be applied to the 2020-2021 starting allocation of each board. Boards that have challenges managing within their allocations should work with their regional offices to ensure that eligible students receive appropriate supports.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Association Reports

B. Turner, Home and School Instruction – has been meeting virtually and keeping in touch to help support schools where they can.

J. Matte-Gasparovic, Autism Ontario – Livia Congi will be stepping down as the alternate for Autism Ontario and Tim McCarthy will be taking her place.

M. Vukov, Community Living Windsor-Essex County

Community Living Essex County

Fundraisers: Holiday Raffle – in lieu of our Annual Gift Wrapping Booth at the Devonshire Mall, we are holding a Holiday Raffle. Prizes include a Hot Tub Spa, \$5,000 cash, 55" Samsung TV and an Early Bird Prize is a BBQ. Tickets will be sold beginning at 9 am on Monday, November 30th 2020 and close on Monday, January 4th, 2021. Please visit

<https://communitylivingessex.org/get-involved/holiday-raffle/> for details.

Partnerships with Community Living Ontario

The *Together, We're Better* contest is an annual contest inviting individual students to submit a story/poem or a class to submit a video expressing why class is better because students who have an intellectual/developmental disability are included and everyone is learning together. The intent is to have students and classes to begin thinking about inclusion and start a conversation about how a diverse class offers a better educational experience for all students. The contest is for Elementary school students (kindergarten to grade 8) who live in Ontario (whether you are learning in a class or in a virtual classroom). The deadline to submit is Friday, February 5th 2021. Winners will be announced on Monday, February 22nd 2021. For more information and to see past winners, please click on the link provided below.

<https://communitylivingontario.ca/en/initiatives/together-were-better-contest/>

Career Compass – Employment Services

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Started piloting pre-employment course virtually with one high school, we've been in touch with S. Vickers, Education Coordinator, and are hoping to look at planning something with Western S.S., Leamington S.S. and Belle River S.S. in the new year.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Aimee Omstead, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee
Committee

Mike Wilcox, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory

NEXT MEETING January 12, 2021