

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Susan Smith, Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)
Mary MacLauchlan, Autism Ontario (Windsor-Essex)
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Connie Buckler, Trustee
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
Beth Cook, Indigenous Community

BOARD PERSONNEL:

Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent of Special Education
Mike Wilcox, Principals, Special Education Programs and Services
Melissa DeBruyne – OPC Secondary Representative

REGRETS:

Beverly Clarke, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Jackie Connelly – OPC Elementary Representative
Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County

Recorder: Marion Goyette

1. Call to Order

K. McKinley called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

2. Attendance

K. McKinley gave regrets from Learning Disabilities Association Windsor/Essex, Brain Injury Association and Canadian Hearing Society. She also announced that Bev Clarke, longtime representative for LDAWE, has changed positions. LDAWE will be nominating a new representative to SEAC.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: M. MacLauchlan

Seconded by: S. Smith

That SEAC approve the agenda for March 8, 2016.

CARRIED.

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: K. Wilson

Seconded by: M. MacLauchlan

That SEAC approve the minutes for February 9, 2015.

CARRIED.

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5. News from the Classroom

Kathryn Collins, Educational Coordinator, presented on the Zones of Regulation. This program helps students become more aware of the emotions they experience and how to regulate their responses in some of our schools. Discussion:

- This program is for every student in the classrooms that have implemented the program although some students require this program outside the classroom.
- A Zones of Regulation tool box is provided to students. The box is available to students to create continual opportunities to practice. There is much education in the classroom of what the tool box is and how it is individualized for each student.
- There are no timelines to roll out into the other schools yet. The cost of release time for training is an issue.
- Parents are informed of this program through communications home and on the school website. The committee suggested that further communication is needed and could it be advertised on parent night or to bring to GECPIC. It was suggested that families should be coached and encouraged to use this program at home.

6. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

Special Education in Early Years

Tim McCarthy explained how the Board supports Early Years educators and students with Autism in the program. Support depends and varies on individual situations and how a child with autism will be transitioned into school.

Discussion:

- If children are involved with Children First before they start school, Children First will do the screening. The board has psychologists that can do an assessment and diagnose autism.
- The psychological staff observe and assess the SK classrooms where appropriate.
- Connections meetings are held before, during and after the transition as needed.
- Staffing for teachers in the kindergarten classrooms is done by the superintendent for elementary staffing. Support staff are allocated to schools by L. McLaughlin and M. Wilcox according to the school profile prepared by the Educational Coordinator in consultation with the principal. The Board usually has all information from agencies for students arriving for the following September. Principals are provided the teachers and educational support staff and it is up to principals to allocate staff giving consideration to numbers and needs of students. Principals consult with Special Education when necessary. Educational Coordinators provide consultation to the principal with staffing and consideration of students and their needs. Reorganization is done in September if the school profile has changed. Levels of support are determined by the number of students that require support not the class sizes.
- The Ministry is reviewing class sizes for kindergarten.
- The number of kindergarten students with high needs is increasing the need for support.
- Schools provide a "quiet space" for students when required. Child and Youth Workers, Speech and Language Pathologists and our Behaviour Management Team also work with the teachers and early childhood educators (ECE) in the kindergarten classrooms as well.
- Autism Ontario is concerned at the numbers of students with autism that will be starting school in the future and how this may affect the support requirements and class sizes.

Renaming of the Adaptive Basic Program

L. McLaughlin stated that the letter to students and staff has gone out and the deadline for submission of names is this Friday. The submissions will be brought to the April meeting.

7. Special Education Plan 2016

The first third of the plan was reviewed with minor changes. Numbers for staffing and students will be presented when available.

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L. McLaughlin stated that a slide show is being developed for principals to show educators when and how curriculum accommodations for individual students should be used in accordance with the Individual Education Plan.

8. Special Education Update

ASD for Secondary Teachers

Thirty-two secondary teachers have been trained since January and another 8 are scheduled for tomorrow. T. McCarthy has a kit for the training and brought samples of the materials. After observing the students he brings teachers together to talk about their struggles and needs as well as the student's struggles and needs.

LDCC

M. Wilcox informed the committee that there was LDCC training held for secondary teachers. Students were present to speak to the teachers about their own learning. The students also brought in their own technology and showed how they use it. The teachers were trained by Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor Essex on applications and how they are helpful for students with learning disabilities.

LST Review

L. McLaughlin reported the committee is looking at the present elementary learning support teacher's role and what the ministry is setting out as well. There is information being gathered in the schools where the LSTs are tracking what they do in 15 minute blocks. This information will be used by the committee to review what the role of the LST is or should be.

As of June 2017 elementary teachers will be trained on writing IEPs and will be writing their own always with support available. There will be continuous training for any new teachers. The Educational Coordinators will be providing support as well.

9. New Business

L. McLaughlin informed the committee that the Ministry of Education's consultations around the provincial schools were taking place this week. M. Wilcox and an itinerant teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing will be attending.

10. Association Reports

Autism Ontario

Autism Ontario Windsor-Essex held their annual Give your Heart to Autism Gala. It was a sold out event. We truly live in a wonderful supportive community.

Community Living Windsor/Essex

No report.

Parents for Children's Mental Health

No report.

Windsor Council of Home and School Associations

The group is still arranging who is going to represent this council at the 100th anniversary in Brantford.

Indigenous Community

B. Cook updated SEAC regarding the ADHOC committee. It is in the hands of the Trustees.

Trustees

C. Buckler asked to please let her know if anyone was going to the Mental Health conference.

11. Distribution

There was no distribution.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

Kim McKinley, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee