

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, October 10, 2017** at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Connie Buckler, Trustee
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Beth Cook, Indigenous Community
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Susan Smith, Community Living, Windsor/Essex County
Anna Jurak, Brain Injury Association, Windsor/Essex County

BOARD PERSONNEL:

Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent
Melissa Debryne, OPC Secondary Representative
Tracey Rilett – OPC Elementary Representative

REGRETS

Mike Wilcox – Supervising Principal of Special Education Services

ABSENT

Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society

RECORDER

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order
C. Buckler called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Items #3 and #4 were postponed until quorum was met. Quorum was made at 1:15.
2. Attendance
M. Wilcox sent regrets.
3. Approval of the Agenda
Moved by: M. Fuduric
Seconded by: K. McKinley
That SEAC approve the agenda for October 10, 2017.

The motion was carried.
4. Approval of Minutes
B. Cook – Amendment to Association Reports, Indigenous Community – change **las** to **last**.
Moved by: B. Cook
Seconded by: M. Fuduric
That SEAC approve the minutes for September 12, 2017.

The motion was carried.
5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes
There was no business arising.

6. News from the Classroom – Student Self-Advocacy

Sharon Maxwell, Educational Coordinator, presented a power point presentation on student self-advocacy. The pilot project was done in April, May and June. They were looking at gr. 7 and 8 students in elementary schools and the secondary school grades varied. S. Maxwell explained how this is defined and the three steps to self-advocacy. The teaching of self-advocacy should start early and develop as the student moves through high school. Characteristics of self-advocacy were explained as well as a useful tool to help build the skills, called a Self-Advocacy Card. This card helps students go through the process of deciding whether they need help, to requesting help. There are 10 schools currently piloting the program. There are many benefits from this program such as allowing students to open up and share with others, it is clear and easy to understand, and it is a good conversation starter for students. There are a few challenges but the benefits far outweigh the challenges. S. Maxwell showed examples of what students created for self-advocacy materials such as a pamphlet, graphic organizer and bookmark. She also explained that the student's ability to contribute to the IEP helps measure the effectiveness of self-advocacy instruction.

L. McLaughlin met with secondary LST's and they are very excited to start this in their own schools. S. Maxwell brought in a student example that was passed around as well as other resources. LDAWE offers SOAR to help with transition to high school, employment, post-secondary education. S. Maxwell shared that the resource was used specifically for self-advocacy and teachers selected components only. Teachers felt it was very well received. The power point presentation will be posted with the minutes to this meeting.

7. EQAO Results

Superintendent Vicki Houston and Amie Tapping shared secondary school results, taking into account the strengths and needs of all students with special education needs. It covered the Gr. 9 EQAO Math Assessment and the Gr. 10 Literacy Assessment. Accommodations were then described (e.g. setting, presentation, response). V. Houston and A. Tapping also discussed the deferrals and exemptions. Statistics for gr. 9 math and gr. 10 literacy (applied and academic) trend over 5 years was explained, as well as the results over time. They also explained what happens beyond the EQAO results as educators consider the test results, as well as the overall well-being of their students, and school effectiveness.

EQAO says that if it is regular class practice to have individual or small group settings and prompts, students do not require an IEP to receive these accommodations for the 2017-2018 assessment. There are no exemptions for gr. 9 math. All schools have their results and they go through student results to provide support for the OSSLT or OLC.

There have been PD workshops about teaching and learning, and capacity building in teachers.

Students are exempted from the EQAO assessment when the principal/school feels that a student should be exempted. Parents are sent a letter to sign. The gr. 6 results are provided to the gr. 7 teachers to try to close the gap by the time the student gets to gr. 9.

Superintendent L. McLaughlin discussed the Empower and Lexia programs specific to the Ministry of Education Research Project. We have 10 schools using Empower and 5 of these schools using Lexia as well. Empower focused on gr. 3 students that were well below grade level in the reading, spelling and writing skills area. She then showed statistics of how Empower and Lexia, and Empower alone improved these skills tremendously from the beginning of the school year to the end. Lexia is delivered during the literacy block, with a maximum of 80

minutes per week. Statistics were then shown with gr. 3 students using Empower and Lexia, and again the results were amazing! Students were very excited and their comments proved that. Going forward, Empower and Lexia are being implemented in every elementary school. Schools are able to purchase additional Lexia licenses. A symposium for students with LD is being planned for April 2018.

8. Special Education Update

Reading Intervention: We received the year one results.

There are many workshops scheduled for October: New to SERR/Gains, Building Bridges, FASD, Hearing Awareness, all with many registered.

ESS Staffing at re-organization: many students registered at our schools. The Board of Trustees approved 13 additional ESS hires. There are no 1:1 EA's, only shared support for students. Behaviour should be supported by the CYW. Always look at regular classroom placement before SERR/Gains. It was explained that if there are 3 or 4 students that need support in their regular classroom because of LD, the EA would work with these 3 or 4 students and also support other students in the school.

This is the first year that teachers are writing their own IEPs in elementary schools but we have been training and offering PD over the past few years. There is an IEP audit every year. The Educational Coordinators are always in schools assisting principals/teachers. If a parent/guardian disagrees with an IEP it is very important to follow communication protocol and ask for discussions.

9. New Business

No new business.

10. Association Reports

Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County

October 19 documentary viewing titled "Being You". This documentary is about road trippers with LD who go across US and meet leaders with LD. Tickets are \$10.00. There are also a limited supply of complimentary tickets available for free for students with LD.

They have a Social Skills program (Leamington) as well as SOAR Transition Planning program.

Indigenous Community

Getting supports from Chiefs of Ontario for Special Education – what is being done for indigenous students? Would like to invite Patrick Loewen to a SEAC meeting. There is a Chiefs of Ontario Special Education conference in October. Can someone from our board attend? L. McLaughlin requested information for follow-up.

Parents for Children's Mental Health

October 17 and 18, the Director of Parents of Children with Mental Health will meet with Karen and their families. They will spend two days in their agencies to discuss family engagement in education.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Connie Buckler, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee