

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at the Administrative Building, 451 Park St. W., Windsor, ON.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Tim McCarthy, Autism Ontario

Kim McKinley, Trustee

Nancy Armstrong, Trustee

Sarah Yang, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County

Martha Vukov, Community Living Essex County

BOARD PERSONNEL IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Mills, Superintendent of Special Education Services

Kristie Sweet, Supervising Principal of Special Education

Marc Crundwell, Supervisor of Psychological and Speech Language Services

Michelle Lowes, OPC Elementary Representative

REGRETS

Chelsey Lackovic, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations

Tina Szymczak, Inclusion Action in Ontario

Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary Representative

ABSENT

Joanna Conrad, Windsor-Essex Down Syndrome Association

Louise Cervini, Indigenous Representative

RECORDER

Melissa Beaton

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on land and surrounded by water, originally inhabited by Indigenous Peoples who have travelled this area since time immemorial. This territory is within the lands honoured by the Wampum Treaties; agreements between the Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-e-naa-bay), Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-oh-show-nee), Lenni (Len-eh) Lenape (Le-naw-pay) and allied

Nations to peacefully share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the Three Fires Confederacy, Ojibwe (Oh-jib-way), Odawa (Oh-dah-wah), Potawatomi (Paw-taw-watt-ohme) and Huron/Wendat (Wen-dat) Peoples. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture while remaining committed to moving forward respectfully with all First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

3. Elections for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (Trustee Chair and Association Vice-Chair)
C. Mills thanked M. Fuduric for service as SEAC Chair for the 2023 year. Quorum was established and declared nominations open for the position of Chairperson for SEAC for the year of 2024.

Moved by: N. Armstrong

That K. McKinley be nominated as the Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2024. K. McKinley accepted the nomination. Seconded by T. McCarthy. C. Mills asked for any other nominations. There were no other nominations. C. Mills declared K. McKinley as the Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2024 by acclamation.

Nominations for Vice-chairperson

Moved by: K. McKinley

That T. McCarthy be nominated as Vice Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2024. T. McCarthy accepted the nomination. Seconded by M. Vukov. Asked for any other nominations. There were no other nominations. K. McKinley declared T. McCarthy as the Vice Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2024 by acclamation.

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: M. Vukov

Seconded by: N. Armstrong

That SEAC Approve the agenda for December 12, 2023.

The motion was carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: M. Fuduric

Seconded by: T. McCarthy

That SEAC approve the minutes of the of November 14, 2023.

The motion was carried.

6. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

There was no business arising as a result of the minutes.

7. Special Education Presentation

- C. Mills presented on Project Search. Project Search is a transition to work program that is a unique one-year employment preparation program for independent/high functioning students with intellectual/developmental disabilities that takes place entirely at the workplace. This opportunity combines classroom instruction, career exploration and hands-on training in a business partners space. Students would meet criteria to be selected from across the system. Year One of the program would be exploratory to determine the viability of the project and begin the process to implement. Year Two, pending funding, would be the first year of implementation. Funding would cover the cost of classroom set-up and offset associated training costs. The expectation after the

second year is that school boards would continue to run a sustainable Project Search Program, on an ongoing basis without further ministry funding. C. Mills explained the process, what Project Search success looks like and how to apply.

8. Special Education Updates

- Reading and Language Intervention Program

M. Crundwell gave an update/overview on the program for the 2022-2023 school year. He shared the goals and implications to support learning and the program structure from January to June 2023. There were 9 schools involved with the pilot, which included both city and county schools. The results of the pilot showed a 34% increase in Initial Sounds, 40% increase in Phoneme Production, 15% increase in Book Knowledge, 44% increase in Word Reading and 22% increase in Burt Score (Expanded Reading List). They received positive feedback and testimonials:

My students now see themselves as “readers” and are highly motivated to read their personal levelled books.

They did face some challenges in areas of implementation, book selection, language strand, training, limited opportunity and parental involvement and the final outcome did not measure the true student gains. Suggestions and possible solutions were shared along with resources and software needs.

- PD Updates

K. Sweet shared the professional development planned for December 2023. A virtual session on the Science of Reading and AAC Users with Dr. Cunningham this presentation was hosted by John McGivney Childrens Centre and included our GAINS teachers, Educational Coordinators and Speech Language Pathologists. We also held a New to GAINS workshop, with time spent with our Speech Language Pathologist and a Communication Disorder Assistant to promote functional communication in the classroom. As well as a New to GAINS Mentor Support workshops with specific set of look-fors around programming and strategies.

9. New Business

There was no new business to report.

10. Association Reports

- M. Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County – we are getting ready for our new programming to begin in January 2024. Information was shared with the committee.
- S. Yang, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise, continue to not have access to email, but we are available by phone. Please continue to call and we will answer as quickly as we can.

11. Distribution

- MASCE meeting highlights from March 14, 2023, were shared with the committee.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.



NEXT MEETING, January 9, 2024

Board Meeting Minutes available on [GECDSB website](#).

Vicki Houston, Director of Education

Chris Mills, Administrative Liaison

[Ministry SEAC website](#)