



GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday April 9, 2024, at the Administration Building, 451 Park St. W., Windsor, ON.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Tim McCarthy, Autism Ontario
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Joanna Conrad, Windsor-Essex Down Syndrome Association
Sarah Yang, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise
Nancy Armstrong, Trustee

BOARD PERSONNEL IN ATTENDANCE

Kristie Sweet, Supervising Principal of Special Education
Michelle Lowes, OPC Elementary Representative
Marc Crundwell, Supervisor of Psychological and Speech Language Services
Cheryl Townsend, Itinerant Teacher Blind/Low Vision
Pamela LaSala, Itinerant Teacher Blind/Low Vision

REGRETS

Chris Mills, Superintendent of Schools/Special Education Programs and Services
Chelsey Lackovic, Windsor Council of Home and School Association
Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary Representative
Marth Vukov, Community Living Essex County

ABSENT

Louise Cervini, Indigenous Representative
Tina Szymczak, Inclusion Action in Ontario

RECORDER

Melissa Beaton

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 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. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: S. Yang

Seconded by: M. Fuduric

That SEAC Approve the Agenda for April 9, 2024.

The motion was carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: T. McCarthy

Seconded by: J. Conrad

That SEAC approve the Minutes of the March 19, 2024, meeting.

The motion was carried.

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

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

6. Special Education Presentation

- Working with Students who are Blind or Low Vision

C. Townsend and P. LaSala presented to SEAC their roles as Blind/Low Vision Itinerant teachers. They work with a wide array of students in kindergarten to grade 12. Some of the services they provide for Low Vision students; trial, order, and train high- and low-tech devices, monitor progress, order texts in appropriate mediums, review and interpret ophthalmology reports and determine how student use their functional vision to access the curriculum. For Braille users they provide 1:1 support from the Teacher of the Visually Impaired with a focus on independence, safe travel, braille instruction, as well as, using a variety of mediums. They work with the classroom educators to determine modifications and accommodations to the curriculum. For Students with Multiple Exceptionalities, that could range from low vision to blind or deafblind and may have Cortical Vision Impairment. These students may not be Braille users. Students are often placed in GAINS or STEPS classrooms and have access to multiple sensory tools that can help stimulate their visual, audible and tactual senses. They provide equipment, ideas and support to the classroom teacher. In all areas they also assist with their IEPs.

7. Special Education Updates

- PD Updates

K. Sweet shared the professional development for the month of April.

STEPS Department Resource Development, the Special Education and Program Department partnered together to provide a collaborative working session. They planned and developed resource material for K Courses. Staff reviewed board resources that are available, designed lesson plans and created materials for their STEPS classrooms.

New to GAINS, teachers had a half day observation in either a GAINS or STEPS classroom. The afternoon session was hosted by Kelsey Smith, 21st Century Teacher

& Education Consultant at John McGivney School Authority. Kelsey shared programming ideas and adapted lessons.

- Review of the Special Education Plan (Standards 11, 15, 16, SEAC-Section C, Coordination of Services with Other Ministries-Section D & Appendices)
Standard
Standard 11: Provincial Demonstration School in Ontario
Standard 15: Accessibility of School Buildings
Standard 16: Transportation for Students with Special Education Funds
Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – Section C
Coordination of Services with Other Ministries or Agencies – Section D
Appendices

Feedback/revisions were collected to apply to the 2024-2025 plan.

8. New Business

There was no new business to report.

9. Association Reports

- M. Fuduric, Learning Disability Association of Windsor-Essex County – We have moved to a new location. Our programming guide was sent out recently and shared with the SEAC. The LDAWE Scholarship is out, applicants must be registered to attend a full-time program at St. Clair College or the University of Windsor.
- T. McCarthy, Autism Ontario - Scholarships are out and information was shared with SEAC. Autism Ontario is accepting online application from April 1-April 30, 2024. The Eleanor Ritchie Post-Secondary Scholarship is awarded to a student on the autism spectrum. The Jeanette Holden Post-Secondary Scholarships for siblings of a person on the autism spectrum who are entering their first year of post-secondary program. And the MacDonald Family Post-Secondary Scholarship is for students with a parent on the autism spectrum who are entering the first year of post-secondary. Last year Autism Ontario called for increased funding to the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) that would reduce wait times and provide greater access to core services for families, they welcomed the announcement of a \$120 million increase to the OAP.
- S. Yang, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise – the FASD Caregiver Support Group held a brainstorming session on April 16th, the flyer was shared with the group. The FASD program is in the process of applying for a new grant to fund the caregiver support group activities. They will be hosting FASC Caregiver Support Group sessions but will not have formal presentations until further funding is approved. The focus will be on providing emotional support for caregivers instead of a formal presentation.

10. Distribution

There was no distribution.

11. Adjournment at 1:57 p.m.



NEXT MEETING, May 14, 2024

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

Vicki Houston, Director of Education

Chris Mills, Administrative Liaison

[Ministry SEAC website](#)