

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, November 10, 2020** via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Aimee Omstead, Trustee
Cathy Cooke, Trustee
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
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

BOARD PERSONNEL

Mike Wilcox, Superintendent of Special Education Services
Kristie Sweet, Supervising Principal of Special Education Services
Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary Representative

REGRETS

Kimberly John, Indigenous Community Representative
Michelle Lowes, OPC Elementary Representative
Monica Gilles, Windsor-Essex County Down Syndrome Association

ABSENT

RECORDER

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: M. Fuduric

Seconded by: B. Turner

That SEAC approve the agenda for November 10, 2020.

The motion was carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: M. Vukov

Seconded by: S. Ruggaber

That SEAC approve the Minutes for October 6, 2020.

The motion was carried.

4. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

M. Wilcox and A. Omstead looked over the letter drafted for the Ministry of Education, regarding Special Incidence Portion (SIP) applications, and it was also sent electronically to SEAC members to review. There may be a change in the SIP process this year so the SEAC committee

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would like to file the letter for now and wait and see what the Ministry plan is. Once the committee has the Ministry information, they will decide how to proceed with the letter.

5. Update on the School Skills Building Development Program – Samantha Mulcaster, Behaviour/Transition Specialist

S. Mulcaster, presented an overview of the After School Skills Program for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder that is being implemented over a three-year period within the GECDDB. A team of BCBAs and ABA Facilitators are implementing Practical Functional Assessment and Skill Based Treatment to support the growth and development of skills for students with ASD who demonstrate challenging behaviour that impedes their learning and increases risk in the classroom in order to get everyone “happy, relaxes and engaged”.

M. Wilcox explained that we are seeing challenging students having amazing changes in behaviour. This is a Ministry funded initiative. We are in year 2 of 3 and the program will finish in the June 2022 school year. We may look at funding in the future to continue with this very successful program. A copy of the power point presentation that S. Mulcaster presented, will be sent to the SEAC committee members.

6. Special Education Updates

PD Updates

K. Sweet provided the SEAC committee with an update of October PD at the GECDDB.

3 mini virtual after school sessions were provided to the Early Years teachers in the Elementary Virtual School. These sessions included:

- A session on structured learning activities
- A session with a Speech and Language Pathologist which focused on oral language, benchmarks in kindergarten, Tier 3 strategies with special consideration for low verbal students
- A session on student profiles, the right questions to ask and learning about Community Partners

Moving forward the Board has set up PD on Demand for after school sessions between November 2020 and January 2021. We will be holding numerous sessions ranging from:

- Digitalizing Tasks
- Making QR Codes and Portfolios
- Boardmaker 7
- New Teachers to RISE
- Elementary LST Workshop
- Using Context for Learning in RISE Math Class
- Positive Behaviour Support in the Classroom
- Gifted 101

ESS Staffing – Model Change

- The needs across the system were reassessed
- We were able to welcome new learners with special needs
- Consistency for students remains a priority
- Will reassess at the next model change in February 2021

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M. Wilcox updated the committee on our Reading Intervention Program. Over the last two years, we piloted the Empower Reading Program. This is an intensive reading intervention program. This program targeted identified students and struggling readers. The program covers training for teachers and LSTs. Empower kits were purchased for all elementary schools. We continue to train teachers new to Empower each year. There was a pause with the program this year because the LSTs were working to support students in the virtual/correspondence schools. We started back up in November and took on all students whose Empower program was disrupted in March 2020, regardless of which cohort the students were in.

Lexia is an online reading program. Green Learning provided free licenses to all students in our board during the Covid closure up until the end of August 2020. This program allows for students to work on their own without parental assistance. This year, the Board purchased licenses for all Gr. 1, 2, 3, 5 and RISE students. An additional 18 licenses were assigned to each elementary school to support other students who may be struggling readers.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Association Reports

M. Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County

A tutoring program will be offered for the winter season. Information will be available soon. In partnership with the Windsor Family Network, an AT (Assisted Technology) training program will be offered for parents who are in learning more about assisted technology.

M. Vukov, Community Living Windsor-Essex County

Fundraisers include the Jingle Bell Run, Walk and Wheel event that runs from December 4th to the 7th. This event will be virtual. For more information, please visit

<https://raceroster.com/events/2020/35293/26th-annual-jingle-bell-run-walk-and-wheel>

Other supports are being offered virtually through Zoom.

In partnership with Community Living Ontario, Re:Action4Inclusion is being offered. This is a movement of young people and their adult allies that puts youth voice and experience at the center of social justice, community change and school culture. They are also offering a FREE three-part Master class for students of all abilities entitled "Harnessing Your Story to Create Big Change". This is being offered in partnership with the *Beantalk Project*. For more information visit bit.ly/oyu-series. WE Youth Network with members from across the county have met 3 times and are looking at options to continue these meetings. CL Essex Count and CL Windsor are looking at working with youth on employment centered project, encouraging peer to peer mentorship. The jobPath program has adapted the pre-employment curriculum to be offered online. They are hoping to work with local schools with the support of EAs/teachers who are on site. Currently, they are connecting with the WECDSB in some early discussion to offer a virtual session to students. They would also like to connect with the GECDSB to offer the same for their students.

Aimee Omstead, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee
Committee

Mike Wilcox, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory

NEXT MEETING December 8, 2020