

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, January 12, 2021** via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Aimee Omstead, Trustee
Cathy Cooke, Trustee
Suzanne Kovach, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Martha Vukov, Community Living Windsor-Essex County
Jan Matte-Gasparovic, Autism Ontario
Bette Turner, Home and School Instruction
Monica Gilles, Windsor-Essex County Down Syndrome Association
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County

BOARD PERSONNEL

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

REGRETS

Sheila Ruggaber, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario
Kimberly John, Indigenous Community Representative

ABSENT

RECORDER

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order
M. Wilcox called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Elections for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Election of Chairperson:

We have always alternated years (trustee one year, association next year, for chair of SEAC)
M. Wilcox established that quorum was obtained and declared nominations open for the position of Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2021. M. Wilcox explained the job description of the chairperson.

Moved by: B. Turner

That M. Fuduric be nominated as Chairperson of the SEAC for the year 2021.

M. Wilcox asked for any other nominations. There were no other nominations.

M. Wilcox declared M. Fuduric as the Chairperson for the 2021 year by acclamation.

M. Fuduric then took her position as Chairperson and continued the election for Vice Chairperson.

Election of Vice Chairperson:

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M. Fuduric declared nominations open for the position of Vice Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2021.

Moved by: A. Omstead

That C. Cooke be nominated as Vice Chairperson of SEAC for the year 2021.

M. Fuduric asked for any other nominations. There were no other nominations.

M. Fuduric declared C. Cooke as the Vice Chairperson for the 2021 year by acclamation.

Motion to close nominations

Moved by: Martha

Seconded by: Aimee

The motion was carried.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: M. Vukov

Seconded by: A. Omstead

That SEAC approve the agenda for January 12, 2021.

The motion was carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: B. Turner

Seconded by: A. Omstead

That SEAC approve the minutes for December 8, 2020.

The motion was carried.

4. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

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

5. Special Education Presentation

Accessibility Update – Matt Pezzaniti

M. Wilcox introduced M. Pezzaniti to the committee. M. Pezzaniti is a teacher with the GECDSB and is passionate about accessibility. He has worked on a number of projects around accessibility during the summer and is currently supporting staff with technology as well as accessibility.

M. Pezzaniti's presentation included a focus on pedagogy and communications and detailed his efforts to provide PD as well as pedagogical supports to senior admin, key communicators and teachers.

Key points included:

- Created accessibility checklists with video support links for staff to refer to while making content
- Designed and delivered flipped PD to more effectively train staff
- Created pedagogical supports to make the transition to a more accessible pedagogy easier for staff
- Supported GAINS coding during an hour of code now, all GEVS GAINS classes have integrated coding into their practice
- Actively working with IT to ensure the website redesign is accessible
- Listed his hopes/plans for future projects and the continuation of ongoing projects

M. Pezzaniti then thanked the SEAC committee for inviting him to present, and thanked the board for supporting him in his passion to make education more accessible.

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6. Special Education Update

PD “On Demand”

Our Educational Coordinators developed a series of webinars for LSTs, RISE teachers, GAINS teachers, STEPS teachers and ESS.

Some of the webinars offered were:

- Introduction of Microsoft Teams: Class Notebook, Staff Notebook, activities that can be taught remotely, virtual field trips that invite the family along.
- Mondays with Amanda (for GAINS teachers): teachers learn how to create interactive tasks to use when teaching virtually.
- Amazing Premade Activities: activities that can be used to teach virtually or implement for in-school learning.
- Boardmaker: explore embedded curriculum within the program.
- Gifted 101: defining and understanding the profile of gifted students and their social/emotional and educational needs.
- Accessibility in the Virtual Classroom – Immersive Reader: learning how to use the integrative Immersive Reader function across all Office 365 apps. This is a great feature for students who have reading exceptionalities and for emerging readers.
- Behaviour Management Systems Recertification: An online model will help staff complete their recertification process by reinforcing emphasis on prevention and non-physical interventions.
- Feed the Need: Teaching Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behaviours in the Classroom: staff will look at the “why” behind common challenging behaviours and will be given tools and strategies to use to meet the students’ needs.
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD): this presentation identifies the areas most impacted by FASD and how we can support students in the classroom and school setting.
- Mike shared with SEAC how Amanda Laforet (virtual GAINS teacher) has been providing ongoing PD sessions every Monday after school from January through to March 2021. The attendance has been very high at her sessions which is great since the sessions have been after school hours. Feedback from her presentations has been tremendous. Mike recommended that SEAC members follow her on Twitter if they have the opportunity. Her twitter feed is [mrs.laforet](#).

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Association Reports

M. Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County: For children, LDAWE is running a Reading Buddies Program, 1:1 online Tutoring and BEST Social Skills. For 16 and older, we are running SET, an employment readiness program.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

M. Fuduric, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Mike Wilcox, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee

NEXT MEETING February 9, 2021