

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on **Tuesday, April 9, 2019** at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Cathy Cooke, Trustee
Aimee Omstead, Trustee
Martha Vukov , Community Living Windsor-Essex County
Bette Turner, Home and School Associations
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Amanda Ing, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario

BOARD PERSONNEL:

Mike Wilcox, Superintendent of Special Education Services
Chris Mills, Supervising Principal of Special Education Services
Tracey Rilett, OPC Elementary Representative
Kristie Sweet, OPC Secondary Representative

REGRETS:

Jan Matte-Gasparovic, Autism Ontario
Sheila Ruggaber, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario

ABSENT:

Kimberly John, Indigenous Community – FNMI

RECORDER:

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order
M. Fuduric called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.
2. Approval of the Agenda
Moved by: K. Wilson
Seconded by: A. Omstead
That SEAC approve the agenda for April 9, 2019.

The motion was carried.
3. Approval of Minutes
Moved by: C. Cooke
Seconded by: A. Omstead
That SEAC approve the minutes for March 19, 2019.

The motion was carried.
4. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes
M. Wilcox handed out a draft letter to send to Lisa Thompson, regarding the decision to take back SIP funds. M. Wilcox gave a summary of the SIP funds that we have received in the past and what these funds were used for. K. Wilson requested stronger wording in the letter because students behaviours are becoming more severe and they may be excluded due to insufficient staffing. M. Fuduric added that we may want to be specific with the types of cases we are dealing with. B. Turner said that we have add funds from SEAC for special education for several years because we do not get enough funding from the government. M. Fuduric replied that this is already in the letter but can be elaborated on. This letter will be tabled for the SEAC meeting in May 2019.

5. Special Education Presentations

Megan Curtis, Social Work and Attendance Counselling Services, **Mental Health Webpage**

The Mental Health webpage was officially launched on January 8, 2019. There was a soft launch in December 2018 for parents who desperately needed the resources. M. Curtis touched on topics such as: consultation, design, apps for students, and information and resources for parents and staff. K. Wilson asked if the number of users could be tracked. M. Curtis responded that there were 208 people who accessed the webpage during the soft launch. There is no way to detect which user groups are accessing the webpage, but many are accessing it.

Kathryn Collins, Educational Coordinator, **Role of the Educational Coordinator**

K. Collins explained the role of the Educational Coordinator in schools. We currently have 8 Educational Coordinators. Their role is to coordinate services for exceptional students. They consult with staff and administrators, and plan school based team meetings, along with parents/guardians. The plan is to develop an action plan for the student. This may lead to putting in more services such as speech and language, psychology, social work.

The Educational Coordination always participates in grade 7 & 8 IPRC reviews to best plan their secondary education. They average 200 meetings per coordinator, in a school year. They also will liaise with agency schools to plan for transition into school. Much time has also been spent in daycares to help transition early years students into school.

Educational Coordinators consult with school personnel, special education services team and parents/guardians relative to student needs and individualized programming. They are able to assist in the development and writing of the IEP. A number of workshops have been offered by the educational coordinators as the elementary teachers are now responsible for the writing of IEP's. They consult with administration to determine the needs of supports for students. Another area of consultation is to determine SEA equipment for students. Other areas of consultation would be: conducting observations regarding school related matters with a focus on special education, assisting in writing of behaviour/safety plans, participating in exclusion meetings.

Professional Development is also a major part of the Educational Coordinators portfolio. Some of the workshops that were held this year are: writing IEPs, Zones of Regulation, FASD.

The role of the Educational Coordinator is a quick-paced, demanding position where many hats are worn. It is rewarding to have an impact at a system level in building teacher capacity and advising and consulting about our most vulnerable population.

6. Special Education Update

- PD Update
 - Empower for Secondary LSTs (Walkerville, General Amherst, Tecumseh Vista)
 - Boardmaker Online for GAINS classrooms
 - Training for elementary LSTs: Technology for EQAO, Independence Rubric, Autism Funding, Jordan's Principle, Mental Health Webpage, STRIVE, Modified Geography
 - Chris D'Souza, March 22 – worked with DSWs in conjunction with Dr. Pyke's office
 - ½ day Math PD for RISE teachers coming in May
 - Contacts for Learning Resources (session for administrators)
 - Modified Geography – looking to roll out in September 2019
 - Mindforce 2019

K. Wilson asked if there was any PD for EAs. M. Wilcox responded that when EAs start at the board, they have already graduated from St. Clair College and have had their practical experience during this time. We have provided PD in the past on various topics that EAs have had a chance to choose from on our allotted PA Days. Recently we have had Chris D'Sousa in to work with our DSWs and CYWs on "Unpacking Bias." It was explained that Behaviour Management Systems(BMS) training is done with all support staff on a three year cycle, EAs receive it as part of the orientation when they start (this is done by T. McCarthy). T. Rilett added that the BMS team will come out to the school and train staff if the school needs more support. In November 2018, PD focused on Trauma. CYWs will get trauma training next fall.

- GNS (Grants for Student Needs)

M. Wilcox let the committee know that the actual technical papers have not been shared which gives actual numbers for budgeting. We are expecting them toward the end of this month. This will impact our Special Education Plan as well as Special Education staffing. Elimination of the Local Priorities Funding will affect 21.5 staff. This includes support staff, teachers, speech and language and itinerant teachers. These positions were funded through the Local Priorities Funding which was aligned to the last set of negotiated collective agreements.

- Special Education Plan Revisions

C. Mills went over revisions to the Special Education Plan for 2019. We are changing the format. We have looked at other boards to see what they do. The Plan has to meet 16 standards and we feel that these standards could be more clearly outlined. M. Wilcox says that by using the standards, the document will be much clearer. He would like more feedback regarding the Special Education Plan and will ask principals to share the plan at their Parent Council meetings. There will be more revisions and we will discuss them at the next SEAC meeting in May.

- Special Olympics Update

The Night of Champions is coming up on Friday, May 3, 2019 at the St. Clair Centre for the Arts. This event is arranged by Superintendent T. Awender and is open to everyone. The actual Special Olympics will be held on May 9 for elementary and May 10 for secondary with a rain date on May 13, 2019.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Association Reports

B. Turner – annual conference and meeting was held in Hamilton on April 5th and 6th. The theme this year was "Survivor". There were six workshops held for our members: *Hitting the Communication Bullseye*, presented by Shawn McKillop (Communications and Community Relations, Grand Erie District School Board), *Building Your Alliance*, presented by Michael Salvatori (CEO of Ontario College of Teachers), *The Power of Validation*, presented by Hamilton/Wentworth District School Board, *How to Survive Your Child's Education Journey*, presented by Arlene Morwell (President, OFHSA) and Laura Gonzalas (Thames Valley Council President), *Game Changers*, presented by Gene Myers (2nd Executive Vice President) and Sandra Hucilak, *How to Find Your Voice*, presented by Sandra Binns (Past President) and Nancy Raymond (Hamilton/Wentworth Council President).

The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations (OFHSA) is an independent organization of members who work with the Public Education System to communicate education today for all children. We are not just fundraising.

Windsor's own Gene Myers won the Col. R.S. McLaughlin Memorial Award. This award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding service to education by fostering cooperation between parents and teachers, promoting understanding between the Home and School.

Amanda Ing – March was Epilepsy Awareness Month. There was an event at the Rose Bowl on March 31. The regular support meeting will be held on April 16th at the United Way at 6:30 pm.

K. Wilson – PCMH retreat on March 29 and 30, included three new leaders from the Essex Chapter. May 6-10 is Childrens Mental Health week. Next meeting is on May 2 from 1-2:30 at Glengarda.

M. Vukov – Many things going on with Community Living Windsor-Essex, please check website for information.

M. Fuduric – LDA is offering two scholarships for students with LD who are going to St. Clair College or University of Windsor. The application deadline is April 26. Please see website for more information. The Roy Cooper Scholarship is due June 14 for students who are pursuing an engineering or bachelor of science, or physical science degree.

9. Distribution

11. Adjournment

Moved by: K. Wilson

Seconded by: A. Omstead

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm.

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Mike Wilcox, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee