

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, February 14, 2017 at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Connie Buckler, Trustee
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Lucie Lombardo, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children's Mental Health
Susan Smith, Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
Trudy Richards, Autism Ontario (Windsor-Essex)

BOARD PERSONNEL:

Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent of Special Education
Mike Wilcox – Principal, Special Education Programs and Services
Tracey Rilett – OPC Elementary Representative
Melissa DeBruyne – OPC Secondary Representative

REGRETS

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County
Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association

ABSENT

Beth Cook, Indigenous Community

Recorder: Marion Goyette

1. Call to Order

T. Richards called the meeting to order at 1:03pm.

2. Attendance

T. Richards gave regrets from Brain Injury Association of Windsor and Essex Count, Canadian Hearing Society and Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: L. Lombardo

Seconded by: K. McKinley

That SEAC approve the agenda for February 14, 2017.

The motion was carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: C. Buckler

Seconded by: K. Wilson

That SEAC approve the minutes for January 17, 2017.

The motion was carried.

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

There was no business arising.

6. Special Education Presentation

Sharon Maxwell, Educational Coordinator, presented on the Marlborough GAINS program. The art program uses different art styles, processes and techniques using different materials and sensory objects. Marlborough is fortunate to have the assistance of various organizations that provide fresh vegetables every week for their cooking class. Every Wednesday, their students serve what started as 70 bowls of soup, that quickly turned into 130 bowls of soup made from the vegetables each week. Students are also responsible for making one breakfast club dish a week. Marlborough was fortunate to have the space and materials from Century/Westview to provide this program. Partnerships happen throughout the system in providing resources for GAINS programs.

7. Functional Behaviour Analysis Presentation

Laura Mason-Drake, Behaviour Management Systems Worker, presented on the use of iPods for data collection on behaviours. FBA is a problem solving tool. The trained worker interviews and observes the student in the classroom. The iPod is used to track the different kinds of behaviour they observe. The data will be useful for the classroom teachers and support staff in recognizing behaviours and intervention. There are 25 staff (CYWs and DSWs) that have been trained to use FBA and the program on the iPod. L. McLaughlin stated that the Board will review the effectiveness and possibly expand the program. There is more information available on the website www.behaviourtrackerpro.com on the program being used.

8. Ministry Pilot Reading Program

Chris Craig, Learning Support Teacher from Northwood shared some of his experiences with the Empower Reading Program and his 8 students who have a profile of learning disability. This program is an intense scripted and interactive program that the students attend 50 to 60 minutes a day. Mr. Craig went through a lesson with the committee members to show some of the strategies involved.

9. Special Education Update

Professional Development

M. Wilcox reported that 30 elementary teachers attended the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder workshop on January 24th. The plan is to offer this workshop again to teachers in the fall. There has been 2 after school IEP workshops. The English Locally Developed Credit Course PD for teachers was on February 13th. February 17th is the half day sessions for all of our Educational Support Staff. There will be 2 full day workshops for SERR teachers on Math.

SEA Claim Process Review

L. McLaughlin reported that the plan is to streamline and make the process more user friendly for everyone involved. The team is meeting again in 6 weeks time to finalize a new process to communicate to staff for implementation in September.

Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI)

L. McLaughlin reported that there have been some changes since the last SEAC meeting. This month we are finishing up with our current Connections, unless there are significant needs. February marks the 6 month 'after starting school' period that Connections occur. Our Connections Support Worker will continue to support the school teams until new children begin their transition into school.

We have received 3 referrals for the next school year. This number is lower than usual. There is a Ministry of Children and Youth Services directive pending which will affect all Autism Service Providers and families in Ontario. Currently

parents can remain longer than the usual 12-month IBI period. Previously, TVCC identified when the child was discharged.

IBI is full, no children can go in unless others start getting discharged. Thames Valley Children's Center is in a holding pattern until the announcement by MCYS.

Unless MCYS makes the determination that Autism Service Providers must provide IBI 5 days per week, we may continue to see children attending school one day per week due to training and meeting days at TVCC. This may also be part of the announcement expected in March.

The Board will be identifying the educators who will be teaching/supporting the new student arrivals from IBI, T. McCarthy will be providing ASD/ABA Training to those affected in June or September. The educators are usually in Early Years classrooms.

Ministry of Education Research Project

L. McLaughlin reported that the Board is meeting with some of the teachers to review the progress of the Lexia Reading Program. L. McLaughlin and M. Wilcox can access the data from the website by individual students or by the classes that are participating. Data is being gathered to help decide about expansion next year. Students working in the Lexia program will soon have access from home in some of the pilot schools. Lexia can be purchased for home use by anyone.

10. New Business

K. Wilson reported that her understanding is that the wait for a psychological assessment in one school is over a year now. This is longer than what Dr. Ricciardi reported when he was at SEAC answering questions on psychological assessments.

L. McLaughlin responded that students still receive supports and services while on the waitlist. There is a process and supports before a student is placed on the list for a psychological assessment. The Board has 2 psychologists that each have half day a week that are scheduled to balance the psychological assessments where there is a need. She asked that the parent contact the principal of the school who would speak to Dr. Ricciardi.

K. Wilson suggested that the Board encourage parents to bring in advocates so that families have support during school meetings and assist with communication between the school and parent. She asked that this be reinforced with principals.

L. McLaughlin replied that the Board encourages open communication with parents. Advocates are welcome at meetings but principals would like to know beforehand that parents are bringing someone with them. She suggested a night similar to the IEP information night for parents to educate on the advocate role.

M. Wilcox added that there are conversations with principals as the Board is aware it can be intimidating for families. One suggestion is to consider the number of staff and administration attending the meeting to make it less intimidating.

L. McLaughlin will gather information regarding the role of the parent advocate.

11. Association Reports

Parents for Children's Mental Health

The director of the organization is coming March 9th to Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital.

T. Rilette reported that on February 15th Building Resiliency is at the Roma Club in Leamington and then the next week at the Caboto Club.

Community Living Windsor/Essex

Copies of the news release from the Ministry of Community and Social Services on Upgrading and Expanding Living Spaces for People with Development Disabilities were distributed.

LDAWE

L. Lombardo will be sending the Accepting Schools Expert Panel End of Mandate Report to M. Goyette to distribute to the committee via email.

Windsor Council of Home and School Associations

J. Percy reported the association met last Monday and began the planning for delegates to go to the spring conference in London.

Autism Ontario

T. Richards reported that the Autism Gala is February 25th. The Autism Awareness walk/run will be in April. People can register on-line for the 5K. The association is also looking for sponsors. T. Richard stated that she attended her grandson's school and provided information to students from JK to Grade 8 on Autism. It was a learning experience for the whole school.

Trustees

C. Buckler stated she was honored to be part of the Night to Shine at Western. Everyone appreciated how the board supported the event.

The meeting ended at 2:50.

Trudy Richards, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee