

# GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016 at the Administration Office.

### MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Connie Buckler, Trustee  
Kim McKinley, Trustee  
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations  
Brianna De Santi, *Alternate*, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County  
Trudy Richards, Autism Ontario (Windsor-Essex)  
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association  
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County  
Beth Cook, Indigenous Community

### BOARD PERSONNEL:

Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent of Special Education  
Vicki Houston – Superintendent – Student Success and Alternative Education  
Tracey Rilett – OPC Elementary Representative  
Melissa DeBruyne – OPC Secondary Representative

### REGRETS:

Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society  
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children’s Mental Health  
Susan Smith, Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)

**Recorder:** Marion Goyette

1. Call to Order  
K. McKinley called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.
2. Attendance  
K. McKinley gave regrets from the Canadian Hearing Society Community Living (Windsor Essex), and Parents for Children’s Mental Health
3. Approval of the Agenda  
**Moved by:** T. Richards  
**Seconded by:** M. Fuduric  
**That SEAC approve the agenda for November 8, 2016.**  

**CARRIED.**
4. Approval of Minutes  
**Moved by:** M. Fuduric  
**Seconded by:** T. Richards  
**That SEAC approve the minutes for October 11, 2016 with amendments from Windsor Council of Home and School Associations and Autism Ontario.**  

**CARRIED.**

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**November 8, 2016**

2

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

In October L. McLaughlin stated she would bring the names of the schools in the Lexia and Empower Programs that the Board has in place. The schools in the Empower program are Amherstburg, Campbell, Davis, Eastwood, Jack Miner, Suzuki, Brock, Forest Glade, Mill Street, Roseland, Roseville, West Gate. This is in addition to the Ministry of Education Research Project.

6. Elementary EQAO Results

Clara Howitt, Superintendent of Program, and Amie Tapping, Teacher Consultant - Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting/EQAO presented the EQAO results from 2015/2016. The GECSB went up 2% in Reading but there was a slight decline in Writing and Math. The decline in Math was common throughout the province. EQAO does not report on ESL or students in Special Education separately due to privacy issues. Superintendent Howitt explained some of the accommodations that may be allowed students with special needs. Amie explained the guidelines for exemptions from the assessment. She stated Program Department and Special Education are working together and developing a deeper understanding for how individual students learn.

7. Special Education Presentation – Autism Sensitivity Demonstration

Tammy Groulx, Educational Coordinator, presented the Student Awareness Kit from Thames Valley Children's Center. These kits are available to help students in the classroom understand challenges some students face. Demonstrations are done in classes as necessary and there are different activities for different age groups. If a new student is introduced into a classroom, the school can request the kit.

8. Reading Intervention Pilot - Update

L. McLaughlin reported that the Empower program is up and running for a maximum of 8 students in each participating school. Initial assessments have been done. The Empower Support Person from Sick Kids has been down to visit many of the schools already.

This is the week that students are starting the Lexia program. The iPads should be out in schools next week for students doing Empower with the Ministry Project. The Board is preparing a cover letter and home use agreement for the iPad. There will be a Skype meeting next week for Principals in our Board participating in the pilot.

L. McLaughlin had the pleasure of attending a symposium at the Amythyst School with Mike Wilcox and three principals. The nine boards participating in the pilots were in attendance. There were many presentations from the different Boards as well as staff from the Provincial Demonstration Schools.

9. Special Education Update

*Connections Update*

L. McLaughlin reported that the Board has hired the new Connections Support Worker who is currently working with 8 specific students. The Board has received more information on money allocated from the Ministry for this program. The rest of the year the board will focus on ABA training for administrators and educators to support students with Autism.

Every student entering school from an IBI program are included in the Connections Program. The plan is put in place in the transition meeting when entering or re-entering school.

*IEP Survey for Parents*

L. McLaughlin reported it is up on the Survey Monkey website until the end of November. There is roughly 200 on the website plus hard copies that have been received. L. McLaughlin is going to strike a committee to do an analysis of the responses.

A letter went out to all parents/guardians of students with an IEP. The survey was not shared on the public website, as it was addressed to specific individuals.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**November 8, 2016**

3

L. McLaughlin reported about the announcement from the Ministry of Education for the new build for General Amherst and Western. The two schools will be sharing a campus. She added that this is a very long process and will keep SEAC updated. The school is not expected to open until September 2019.

*Professional Development Update*

M. Wilcox reported that on October 26<sup>th</sup> the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) included information on the development of IEPs. On November 15<sup>th</sup> there is a session for teachers of Math Locally Developed Credit Courses (LDCC). LDAWE will be doing a component on assistive technology on this day as well. November 18<sup>th</sup> is professional development for Educational Support Staff and subject specific for teachers from grades 7 - 12. In the spring there were several suggestions for PD from the Support Staff themselves and the Board was able to provide sessions on some of their suggestions. On December 1<sup>st</sup> there will be a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome workshop for teachers presented by 2 Educational Coordinators. Also on December 1<sup>st</sup> there is a PD session for teachers of Science LDCC courses. The IEP audits are scheduled in January.

10. New Business

T. Richards stated that K. McKinley had informed her that the Board website was being updated. L. McLaughlin informed her that the same information on the former website has been transferred. Special Education will be reviewing the website to update and add information. T. Richards suggested that the Western Resource Booklet helps parents understand the process and programs at the school. She added that this information would also be helpful for parents/guardians at IPRC meetings. M. Debruyne replied that more people will have access to the new school websites so now the information will be easier to keep current.

K. McKinley suggested that the committee could review the Special Education website in the new year.

11. Association Reports

*Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County*

The Association is hosting a free concussion workshop at Tecumseh arena on November 24th. A panel of experts will speak about identifying concussions on the playing field, return to play guidelines, school concussion policy and baseline testing.

*Autism Ontario*

On Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> the chapter is holding an activity for their families at Adventure Bay. The City of Windsor has allowed them the use of Adventure Bay. The Staff have been briefed and safety checks are in place. Autism Ontario holds many activities for families of children with Autism for free or for a nominal fee to their members. There is a PEERs Program, Children's Friendship training, music therapy and other fun and learning activities.

11. Distribution

There was no distribution.

K. McKinley reminded the committee that the Elections for chair are in January and to feel free contact her with any questions if they are considering the position.

Lunch will be provided for the December 13th meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:10pm.

Kim McKinley, Chairperson  
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison  
Special Education Advisory Committee

