

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Beverly Clarke, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Susan Smith, Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)
Mary MacLauchlan, Autism Ontario (Windsor-Essex)
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children’s Mental Health
Connie Buckler, Trustee
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County
Beth Cook, Indigenous Community

BOARD PERSONNEL:

Lynn McLaughlin – Superintendent of Special Education
Jackie Connelly – OPC Elementary Representative
Mike Wilcox, Principals, Special Education Programs and Services

REGRETS:

Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association (received after meeting began)
Melissa MacIntyre – OPC Secondary Representative

Recorder: Marion Goyette

1. Call to Order

Bev Clarke called the meeting to order at 1:05pm.

2. Attendance

B. Clarke reported there were no regrets. Regrets were emailed from Monica Gilles after the meeting started. B. Cook arrived after the attendance was reported.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: C. Buckler

Seconded by: S. Smith

That SEAC approve the agenda for October 13, 2015.

CARRIED.

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: K. Wilson

Seconded by: M. MacLauchlan

That SEAC approve the minutes of September 15, 2015.

CARRIED.

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

There was no business arising.

6. News From the Classroom

Laura Dunn, Education Coordinator was not able to attend the meeting. In her place M. Wilcox reviewed the PowerPoint presentation with the committee. The presentation was on the STEPS (Skills to Enhance Personal Success) program and how students are integrated into the school community at Leamington District Secondary School. Every Thursday the "Working with Children" class works with students in the STEPS program on activities which allow relationships to flourish. Students are integrated into the physical education classes to participate in the activities; paired up with a "Best Buddies" under the LDSS Chapter of the program; participate in school and community partnerships, outings into the community and enjoy many opportunities to participate in the school environment. The Special Education Budget allows each GAINS and STEPS class funds for field trips.

M. MacLauchlan requested clarification in the minutes that STEPS students may be integrated into classes but do not receive credits towards a diploma.

7. Special Education Update

Special Needs Strategy

There were 3 Action Items from the last meeting for the Consolidated Service Table. There will be Ministry consultation to see if the Co-Lead proposal will be considered. The Ministry mandate was one single lead agency. When this is complete, everyone at the whole table will have a vote as to whether or not they support the submission of the proposal. The proposal will then be completed with amendments as discussed.

The Integrated Rehab table met weekly all summer. There is a full table invite on October 28th. This will include physiotherapy and occupational therapy in addition to Speech and Language. The group is working toward integrated rehab plan that is barrier free. A survey and focus group sessions were done.

L. McLaughlin will report again next month.

Staffing Update

L. McLaughlin reviewed the changes of practice for Thames Valley for children in IBI going from 5 days a week to 4 days. The Board now has 3 students from IBI who will be attending school one day a week. Meetings are in process or about to occur for the transition planning. It was necessary to go to the Trustees for the addition of one EA that will work with students the one day they are at school. Thames Valley will stagger the days of attendance for the students.

LD Steering Committee

There were 6 committee members present at our September Meeting. The committee is process of creating a clear resource document for educators from grade 1 through secondary school.

LD@School will be funding through a partnership with us a strength based theme video about students with a learning disability. The video will focus on what the students can do. The video will be showcasing students from primary up on how they are experiencing success. The students will be released from school to participate. Assistive technology will be part of it.

8. New Business

M. MacLauchlan stated she would like to put forward a motion on the basis that SEAC had not been consulted with regarding closing Western.

Moved by: M. MacLauchlan

Seconded by: K. Wilson

That SEAC does not recommend the closing of Western, a special education school.

Kim McKinley and Connie Bucker declared a conflict and left the Board Committee Room.

Discussion:

Information was shared regarding PARC guidelines and the process for the past year. We do not know what that decision will be.

M. MacLauchlan stated her concern that the Board will be making the decisions prior to June and not bring the changes to SEAC until then.

The Committee was assured that discussion would occur long before May.

M. MacLauchlan stated she disagrees with the process. There has been no discussion about closing special education classrooms in the county.

Information was shared regarding the difference between special education programs and Locally Developed Compulsory Courses. The special education programs would be relocated. As stated in the Special Education Plan the students in the modified program stream at Western are considered partially integrated and transition rooms at either Westview or Western Secondary Schools are fully self contained.

K. Wilson stated the concern is SEAC has not been consulted in the PARC processes. Western is a program held within a school. It is an entire program being closed.

A previous PARC with Forster and Century was discussed which resulted in the relocation of special education programs. Westview is now a community school with special education programs. SEAC was not consulted.

M. MacLauchlan stated she is not looking at it as part of the PARC. When a school is closed the programs are closed. The program is closed when we close the school.

The Committee was assured that should Western close, they will be informed of the transition plans and process for our students.

M. MacLauchlan stated that there was a significant cost when the STEPS programs were expanded. Costs to special education have not been shared with SEAC.

B. Clarke stated that SEAC has received a fair amount of information about the LDCC and that the board has moved to have the courses available in all schools.

L. McLaughlin stated that all costs were shared with the PARC/Trustees. They would be minimal.

B. Clarke asked if there was further discussion or concerns.

J. Connelly shared that it is working well for her students who had been at Hetherington and are now attending Riverside

M. MacLauchlan asked if the recommendation will go to the Trustees for the Board Meeting on October 13th. L. McLaughlin informed her it would go forward at the next Board Meeting on October 20th. The October 13th was a Special meeting of the Board for the PARC.

B. Clarke called for the vote and it was **DEFEATED.**
The vote count was 3 in favor and 6 abstentions.

L. McLaughlin stated that she makes a commitment to the committee that following the PARC decision, information will be brought forward to SEAC regarding special education programs if the decision is to close Western.

9. Association Reports
Canadian Hearing Society
No report.

Windsor Council of Home and School Associations

Home and School held a meeting October 5th and decided that because of the sanctions currently occurring in the schools, this report stresses that Home and School is still helping in the school but they are timing it so it does not happen after school but only during school hours. Council will still be meeting and hearing reports but we will not be planning anything. Their fall program will not be held this year.

Parents for Children's Mental Health

October 1st PCMH and Center of Excellence held an all day community presentation of family engagement to service providers. Upcoming November 12th and 13th the center for mental health and addiction and our local community is hosting a Systems Improvement through Service Collaboration two day workshop.

Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)

No report.

Indigenous Community

The Indigenous Parent Community has received a Reaching Out Grant. They are hoping to help their families with special needs. They will be holding sessions for parents in the community to help gain knowledge of the issues facing the communities. They are hoping to work together with the community.

Autism Ontario

Over the summer Autism Ontario Windsor Essex Chapter provided \$425 in funding to support families who have a child/adult with ASD. They also held their free family picnic with lunch & carnival games. It was well attended and enjoyed by all. For information regarding our upcoming events & classes please go to our website.

Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County

The Brain Injury Association is hosting a workshop. Sharon Seslija, Program Teacher Consultant for the GECDSB, will be updating attendees on the school concussion policy. This is a free event. A flyer was distributed and will be forwarded to the committee via email for distribution.

LDAWE

DLAWE participated in the ADHD awareness day on October 2nd. The Gala was also on the 2ND of October. The attendance of teachers was down this year in comparison to other years. LDAWE is receiving many referrals for assistive technology. The Open House is on October 24th. LDAWE received money from Rotary for a 3-D printer. They are hoping to establish a 3-D club. They will be running a program to get students interested in the technology.

10. Distribution

There was no discussion on the distribution.

B. Clarke shared that SEAC is going to have a presentation from the Brain Injury Association of Windsor/Essex after Christmas.

L. McLaughlin shared that next month Dr. Howitt will present on the Math Task Force, and Superintendent Houston on EQAO. In December we have invited Dr. Pyke for mental health.

11. Adjournment

Moved by: C. Buckler

Seconded by: K. Wilson

That SEAC adjourn the meeting at 2:10pm

CARRIED.

Bev Clarke, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee