

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

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2017 at the Administration Office.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Connie Buckler, Trustee
Kim McKinley, Trustee
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Beth Cook, Indigenous Community
JoAnn Percy, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations
Monica Gilles, Windsor Essex County Down Syndrome Association
Karen Wilson, Parents for Children’s Mental Health

BOARD PERSONNEL:

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

REGRETS

Meghan Johnson, Canadian Hearing Society
Susan Smith, Community Living (Windsor/Essex County)

ABSENT

Kim Fralik, Brain Injury Association of Windsor & Essex County
Representative from Autism Ontario

RECORDER

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order

C. Buckler called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Items #3 and #4 were postponed until quorum was met. Quorum was made at 1:15. Lynn introduced Dr. Cory Saunders, Supervisor of Psychology/Speech and Language Services, and Peggy Russette, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Special Education Services. They are both in their new roles with the board this school year.

2. Attendance

M. Johnson sent regrets from, Canadian Hearing Society, and Susan Smith gave regrets from Community Living.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: K. McKinley

Seconded by: K. Wilson

That SEAC approve the agenda for September 12, 2017.

The motion was carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

B. Cook – Asked to change “accommodations” to “support” on Association Reports, *Indigenous Community* report for June 13, 2017 minutes.

Moved by: M. Fuduric

Seconded by: K. McKinley

That SEAC approve the minutes for June 13, 2017.

The motion was carried.

5. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

There was no business arising.

6. The Well-being and Mental Health Strategic Plan

Dr. Sharon Pyke, Superintendent of Education, Student Well-being, presented a power point presentation on the Mental Health Strategic Plan... how we can support the mental health and well-being of our students. This week is suicide prevention week and we were asked to wear yellow ribbons this week in support of this important program. She explained that this plan will increase awareness of signs and where to get help. Dr. Pyke emphasized the importance of sleep especially for students at the secondary school level. She also explained that students in early years may have had no support prior to entering school, and that there are pamphlets for families on early year mental health to help recognize signs and symptoms. Overall this plan will help staff to understand the aspects of mental health and learn strategies to help students.

7. Special Education Update

Connections: We have no additional information from Thames Valley Children's Centre. A news release in the summer from MCYS stated that parents will be able to hire privately for IBI. We have had students coming to school only 1 day per week in the past. There is only 1 student doing this, this year so far. Families are staying at Thames Valley much longer. We met with the Therapeutic Learning Centre (a private IBI provider) and it is the same protocol for them when students enter our schools. The MCYS news release also shared that an IBI certification process is being developed by the province. Last year there was a SIP tier 3 team, consisting of a teacher and a DSW who spent two weeks at a time at schools supporting our most complex students. The WPV reports declined greatly, having a direct positive impact on safety and success of our students. We have added two additional staff for a total of 4 (2 DMSWs and 2 BMSWs) who go out to schools to support for short periods of time. This year, we have added a SIP/TIER 3 team specific to Early Years. Teams are sent by request of the school principal.

Ministry of Education Research Project: L. McLaughlin discussed the MOE Research Project – Empower. We were selected to be funded and were going to have Empower in 22 schools already. Of the 10 schools in the project, 97% of the students showed improvement in reading, some remarkably. 20 schools found the way to fund their own kits this year allowing Empower to now be in every elementary school. Lexia was in 9 schools, and the results are great! Lexia will be going out to all schools as a tier 2 intervention tool in grade 2 and 3 classrooms. The MOE project is following students who have only Empower, Empower & Lexia. This year, the board is also following 5 schools where students had Empower and will have Lexia to follow. Initial results saw a 3% improvement in reading (EQAO). This boosts confidence and self-esteem in students. Each student was given an iPad. We are in the process of investigating whether this helped the students or not.

Special Education in Ontario, Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy & Resource Guide 2017: Special Education of Ontario – Learning Support Guide – new guide just came out. It replaces the old IEP guide, standards for special education plans, transition plans. The electronic link will be made available. It is in draft form, however it is effectively immediately.

M. Wilcox informed everyone about our professional development workshops. We had four IEP and four clevr workshops in August and all sessions were full. This is a great opportunity for elementary classroom teachers

who, starting this year, are writing their own IEPs. We also had the LST Binder Rollout, and Zones of Regulation workshops. Every school will have Zones of Regulation. It was very good to have that common language in schools. L. McLaughlin informed us that the program is not yet available in French so they are in the process of translation. M. Wilcox also let us know that there is a 2-day Empower training for LSTs on Sept. 13 and 14, and a refresher training on September 15. Lexia workshops will be held on Sept. 19 and 20, and a New to GAINS and SERR workshop on Sept. 28.

10. New Business

A question was posed... Are we giving consideration to having a math teacher in elementary schools?

L. McLaughlin shared that there have been many discussions with senior administration regarding cross-curricular learning, where gr. 7 & 8 math focus was discussed. Every school has had a lead learning team which has worked very well. We are also providing tools to teacher to focus on math vocabulary. Early years and gr. 1, 2, 3 math kits have been provided with a resource specific vocabulary related to math.

T. Rillett shared that many schools are using a resource called Number Talks. Students can solve a problem in 5 to 10 minutes and can verbalize to find the answer, proving that there is not only one way to solve a math problem.

K. McKinley stated that there was PD for Early Years teachers and ECEs regarding the significance of math for early years students. She said that whether a child is going to graduate from high school can be predicted in the first six years. There have been ideas with new staff and staff at other schools on Twitter.

T. Rillett – program called Knowledge Hook for gr. 7 to 10 is coming to our schools. It is an online program that can be done at school or home and students play to get past certain levels. They can earn medals when passing levels. Our Math Strategy plans will take time to implement.

11. Association Reports

Home School Association

J. Percy - The first meeting will be October 3rd, usually in the Leamington Room.

Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County

J. Fuduric – Hosting a documentary screening – 3 road trippers who meet leaders with LD and ADHD. Will have a panel discussion of high school and college students, and young adults. The tickets are \$10.00. Donations are also accepted if you cannot attend.

Indigenous Community

B. Cook – Waiting for Indigenous Protocol Committee to form and move forward from that. Beth is sending an email to C. Howitt re: FNMI conference. They had good resources last year.

Parents for Children's Mental Health

K. Wilson – Executive Director from PCH working with 4 agencies working with families to impact and influence agencies. Brings families for 1 on 1 training to be more influential with the agencies.

Brain Injury Association

They are in transition Jeannette Ware-Mikhael is the interim director. Hiring may take place the first week of October. Starting parents support group for ABI or concussion in November. It will run every Tuesday. They will send flyers to us to distribute to schools. Helmets for Kids – if any schools are interested, application forms are available on their website.

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K. McKinley – reminded us that board meetings start next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Connie Buckler, Chairperson
Special Education Advisory Committee

Lynn McLaughlin, Administrative Liaison
Special Education Advisory Committee