

**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, December 14, 2021** via Microsoft Teams Meeting.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Cathy Cooke, Trustee  
Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County  
Jan Matte-Gasparovic, Autism Ontario  
Aimee Omstead, Trustee  
Bette Turner, Home and School Instruction  
Monica Gilles, Windsor-Essex County Down Syndrome Association  
Sheila Ruggaber, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario  
Suzanne Kovach, Parents for Children's Mental Health

**BOARD PERSONNEL**

Mike Wilcox, Superintendent of Special Education Services  
Kristie Sweet, Supervising Principal of Special Education Services  
Theresa Williams, OPC Secondary Representative

**REGRETS**

Louise Cervini, Indigenous Community Representative  
Kelly Stack, Brain Injury Association, Windsor-Essex  
Martha Vukov, Community Living Windsor-Essex County

**ABSENT**

**RECORDER**

Peggy Russette

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.

**Land Acknowledgement**

*We acknowledge that we are on land and surrounded by water, originally inhabited by Indigenous Peoples who have travelled this area since time immemorial. This territory is within the lands honoured by the Wampum Treaties; agreements between the Anishinaabe ([Ah-nish-e-naa-bay](#)), Haudenosaunee ([Hoe-den-oh-show-nee](#)), Leni ([Len-eh](#)) Lenape ([Le-naw-pay](#)) and allied Nations to peacefully share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the Three Fires Confederacy, Ojibwe ([Oh-jib-way](#)), Odawa ([Oh-dah-wah](#)), Potawatomi ([Paw-taw-watt-oh-me](#)) and Huron/Wendat ([Wen-dat](#)) Peoples. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture while remaining committed to moving forward respectfully with all First Nations, Inuit and Métis*

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: B. Turner

Seconded by: C. Cooke

That SEAC approve the agenda for December 14, 2021.

The motion was carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

Moved by: S. Ruggaber

Seconded by: A. Omstead

That SEAC approve the minutes for November 9, 2021.

The motion was carried.

4. Business Arising as a Result of the Minutes

A letter was drafted and sent to Minister Lecce on behalf of the Special Education Advisory and the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee in support of **Bill 172 An Act in Relation to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**.

5. Special Education Presentation

**Blue Jays Challenge, presented by S. Maxwell, Education Coordinator**

In Ontario there are approximately 235,000 children and youth living with disabilities, many of whom have not taken part in extra-curricular sport compared to the general population.

*Jays Care* believes in equity and accessibility for all children and youth. The Blue Jays in partnership with both Little League Canada and Baseball Canada have created programs that are adaptive and accessible for children and youth living with cognitive and physical disabilities.

When a school is approved as an affiliate school, they receive training. Our teachers received virtual training after school. They received a coaches guide, 15 week of adaptive lesson plans, over \$1000.00 worth of Adaptive Baseball equipment and ongoing incentives and support.

For this school year 2021/2022 we had 10 schools selected to be affiliate schools. Five GAINS programs and 5 STEPS programs.

Blue Jays Care measures the impact of each of their programs. Last year 98% of coaches said that training gave them the skills and knowledge they need to be a great Challenger Baseball coach, 82% of partners reported that their child is more confident in their physical skills since participating in Challenger Baseball, and 88% of athletes reported that Challenger Baseball makes them feel like they can do anything if they try their best. In addition independence, relationships, baseball, and literacy are among other skills increased.

The Challenger program is also sponsored by Sobeys Canada. After 10 baseball games/sessions Sobeys offers schools the chance to participate in Healthy Athlete Clinics. The Special Education department was awarded a Sobeys Healthy Body, Healthy Mind grant that will be utilized in February. We are exploring the possibility of one of these sessions for the STEPS/GAINS classrooms.

S. Maxwell then welcomed feedback and answered questions from the SEAC committee.

6. Special Education Update

**Ministry Math Pilot**

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- The purpose of the pilot is to test and identify instructional strategies and supports for students with special education needs that will address gaps in mathematics achievement in this crucial period leading up to destreamed math in Grade 9
  - Focus is on Junior grades – focus on students formally identified with a Learning Disability
  - Measure the impact of the two proposed interventions
- Symphony Math**
- Tier 2 blended learning intervention
  - Greenfield Learning which is the creators of Lexia Core5
  - Intuitive math intervention that is facilitated using an iPad
  - Program takes students through the fundamentals of math and monitors students rate of progress
  - Teacher dashboard indicates when students are struggling
  - Small group or individual lessons are provided to the teacher to implement with struggling students
  - We have purchased 100 licenses
  - It is being implemented in 2 schools as part of the pilot – LaSalle PS and West Gate PS – utilizing marker students identified by a universal screener (aimswebPlus) with a focus on students identified with a learning disability
  - Sample size is approximately 50 students
  - We have provided Davis PS and Roseville PS with the additional 50 licenses and will be monitoring student progress there as well
  - Schools have been provided with additional iPads to help with implementation of the program
- Key Math**
- Tier 3 in person, paper and pencil intervention tool
  - Pearson Math Canada
  - Individually administered to identify a student's functional range (grade level)
  - 3 areas of math – conceptual knowledge, operations and application
  - The LST would normally implement this type of resource – a teacher facilitator was hired to implement with small groups of marker students
  - After an initial Diagnostic, student progress is tracked in the Assist software using a dashboard similar to Symphony Math
  - Student gaps are identified prompting customized intervention materials
  - 1 kit purchased which includes 2 content easels, student forms and booklet, and scoring software that links to the Essential Resources intervention program
  - It is being implemented at Essex PS as part of the math pilot - utilizing students identified by the universal screener aimswebPlus, with a focus on students identified with a learning disability
  - Sample size is 40 students
  - We have provided Essex PS with additional iPads as well

### **Ministry Guide to Remote Learning for Students with Special Education Needs**

This document was shared with educators and SEAC committee members at the request of the Ministry of Education.

#### Special Education PD Update

#### **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness PD for Elementary Learning Support Teachers**

- Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Primary Curriculum was distributed to all Learning Support Teachers
- A 90 minute webinar was provided on this resource with topics including:
  - The what and why of phonemic awareness instruction

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- An understanding of the scope and sequence of 8 Phonological and Phonemic Awareness skills taught in the daily lessons
- This resource provides 35 weeks of daily explicit and systematic Phonological and Phonemic Awareness lessons
- Met with LSTs to discuss implementation in classrooms

**New to the Learning Support Teacher Role**

- A half day of PD for new elementary LSTs. The session will be spent exploring topics relevant to the position of the LST including managing the paperwork, the tiered intervention model, Special Education and English as a Second Language resources for use when supporting students.

7. New Business

Will check into redefining the exceptionality of Autism in the Special Education Plan.

8. Association Reports

Bette Turner, Home and School Instruction – we are doing well with our safety protocols in the schools. Parents are looking forward to having their children home for the holidays.

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County – programs starting up in January. Will be offering in-person social skills classes on Mondays at the John McGivney Children's Centre starting January 24, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 1:52 pm.

Mary-Ann Fuduric, Chairperson  
Special Education Advisory Committee

Mike Wilcox, Administrative Liaison  
Special Education Advisory Committee

**NEXT MEETING January 11, 2022**

Board Meeting Minutes Available on GECDSB Website

<https://publicboard.ca/Board/Meetings/Pages/default.aspx>

Erin Kelly  
Director of Education

Mike Wilcox  
Administrative Liaison

(Ministry SEAC Website) [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/seac/)