

A meeting of the **Special Education Advisory Committee** was held on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Cambridge Room, Education Centre, with the following members in attendance:

- Trustee members: John Hendry, Cindy Watson
- Association Members: Mary Cunningham, Sarah Drexler, Graham Dunn, Angela Sider, Kris Pryke, Katherine Waybrant
- Association Alternates: Jennifer Checkley, Marianne Domm,
- Non-Association Members: Colleen Borman, Sherri Ramage

Board Staff in attendance: Scott R. Miller, Karin Sonnenberg  
Regrets: Cindy Benedetti, Tina Blanchette, Kristina Campbell, Dawn Clelland, Molly Fortier, Liz Nickason, Janine Oosterveld, Amy Tupling, Katherine Woodcock  
Guest: Shannon Taylor

### **CALL TO ORDER**

SEAC Chair A. Sider called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1 .Moved by K. Waybrant, seconded by K. Pryke:

**That the agenda of the April 13, 2016, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.**

- Carried -

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2. Moved by G. Dunn, seconded by M. Domm:

**That the minutes of the March 2, 2016, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.**

- Carried -

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE**

S. Miller, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, showed a short clip of a TedTalk, "The Happy Secret to Better Work" with Shawn Achor, [video](#)

SEAC dates 2016-17 were presented to members. They will be held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and will be in the new large meeting room in Building 1.

### **WRDSB Special Education Updates and Follow-up**

We are in budget season. One cost saving measure is moving the majority of congregated class elementary students to regular bell times next year, and some will be integrated into regular

classrooms. A few children will still be on a shortened day. This will be communicated to parents in the near future but you can communicate this information to your associations.

Another cost saving measure is to have students ride on regular bus routes if they are going to their home school. Secondary school students may be riding city buses (bus tickets).

Questions were fielded by S. Miller.

All preliminary budgets are in for next year- we have an increase in enrolment with the refugee students coming in even though secondary enrolment has decreased so likely status quo will remain. 18% of students receive special education support, with refugees, that number will be higher.

Franklin, Wilson, Howard Robertson have been “holding schools”- a testament to our organization and community to see how quickly refugees are getting placed and in school.

K. Pryke had a question about attendance and truancy. Grand Erie DSB had attendance officers who were teachers (8 years ago) and students were taken to court for truancy. Many boards use attendance counsellors in different ways.

K. Pryke is in private practice and sees clients that have been given letters regarding truancy. Questions- what is our board’s stance on attendance counsellors and parameters of truancy. She has seen a shift (15 day practice) in being “by the book”.

S. Miller addressed the question- legislation did change- more diligent on issue is symptomatic of something else. No students have been charged with truancy this year. We try to work with the family through program review. Due to job action in the fall, this group was not meeting. Now the group is starting to work together again. Continuing to work with consistency in this area.

Board report went to the Committee of the Whole [Committee of Whole report](#) regarding retention rates in March as information.

#### SEAC Steering Committee: Continuing the Discussion and Next Steps

S. Miller provided a handout - SEAC April 13, 2016 Future Planning (powerpoint presentation). The steering committee worked tonight on consolidating the first 2 guiding principles. SEAC members broke into groups to further discuss the vision and next guiding principles. S. Miller will bring results to next meeting.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

K Waybrant - 3 or 4 months ago, Osgoode Hall put on a workshop regarding the education act. Wondered at that time if a SEAC member would be able to go. A couple of weeks ago Community Living had a workshop and someone talked about the same subjects - extremely interesting. This would be a great topic to bring to SEAC. Would it be possible to have an opportunity like this for someone to present at our SEAC? K. Waybrant passed some literature around to members. S. Miller thought it was a great idea - we could have our Board lawyer present at no cost. (Nadia Tymenchenko). S. Miller will touch base with her to arrange something. K. Waybrant will investigate her contact, Exec Direc of ARCH, and get back in touch with S. Miller.

#### ROUND TABLE ASSOCIATION REPORTS

There were no association reports.

**TRUSTEE REPORT**

Strategic Plan - Trustee Watson explained that we will be having a consultation meeting and it will be on May 12 & 13 to discuss further on how to engage parents and different groups within the Board.

S. Miller will be attending the Westmount School opening so C. Benedetti will be present at the next meeting. He can still attend a Steering Committee meeting prior to this on May 11.

**CHAIR REPORT**

Nothing to report.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next SEAC meeting date is **Wednesday, May 11, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the **Cambridge Room**, Education Centre.

**ADJOURNMENT**

3. Moved by M. Cunningham, seconded by K. Pryke:

**That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.**

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.