

December 14, 2016
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the **Special Education Advisory Committee** was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the St Jacobs Learning Hub, Education Centre, with the following members in attendance:

- Trustee members: Cindy Watson
- Association Members: Tina Blanchette, Kristina Campbell, Jennifer Checkley, Dawn Clelland, Graham Dunn, Angela Sider, Kris Pryke, Shannon Taylor, Amy Tupling,
- Association Alternates: Sofia Catania, Amanda Schultz,
- Non-Association Members:, Stuart Cross, Sherri Popovich, Carmen Sutherland, Amy Tupling,

Board Staff in attendance: Cindy Benedetti, Nick Manning, Scott R. Miller, Lila Read, Karin Sonnenberg

Regrets: Colleen Borman, Mary Cunningham, Marianne Domm, Molly Fortier, John Hendry, Janine Oosterveld, Katherine Waybrant

CALL TO ORDER

SEAC Chair A. Sider called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by K. Pryke, seconded by Amanda Schultz:

That the agenda of the December 14, 2016, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

2. Moved by T. Blanchette, seconded by S. Taylor:

That the minutes of the November 9, 2016 SEAC meeting be changed to reflect an additional comment (Page 2, Inclusive Education & Accommodating Disability). This comment will include that the Waterloo District School Board was one out of two school boards that was able to provide Exclusion Data amongst the 10 that this information was requested.

- Carried-

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. Moved by K. Pryke, seconded by S. Catania:

That the minutes of the November 9, 2016, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

Presentation: Strategic Plan Purpose Statement: Nick Manning, Communications Manager gave a power point presentation regarding the board's purpose statement. (*See attached Purpose Statement.pdf*)

What is a purpose statement (our reason for being)? It translates the strategic plan into a short clear statement (words that everyone in the system can live by and model). A purpose statement is motivational in nature, connecting the heart and head.

Vote at wrdsb.ca by tomorrow (December 15) for one of 4 purpose statements. The vote is open to everyone (students, community, employees). N. Manning also encouraged sharing stories at #wearewrdsb.

N. Manning fielded questions from SEAC members.

D Clelland – Felt it was important that the students made the choices for the Purpose Statement options (student voice).

T. Blanchette – Wondered if students were voting on this and the answer was yes that some teachers are building this into class time.

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE

S. Miller, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being presented highlights resulting from a congregated class audit

Many IEP's were very similar in the past within the congregated classes and there has been a real emphasis on IEP's being individualized

Spoke to the Work and Transition Support Program (WATS) - in secondary. In secondary Priority 1 classes over 300 students are participating in experimental learning. This program is unique in our province.

A focus on accessibility to technology has resulted in a large influx of devices into our classrooms, this has been done through SEA Funding, which also results in individual training and support for each teacher.

Marianne, Kathy, Scott - involved in a Ministry Session to provide feedback on Alternative Curriculum. This feedback has resulted in a document, which is almost completed. The document will be a framework for Alternative Curriculum. The hope is this will be available for the start of 2017-2018 school year.

Reading pilot project- 5 elementary schools in Cambridge are involved (Central, Saginaw Hillcrest, Coronation and Manchester.

Empower Reading Program is the intervention being used. Focus is on early intervention Gr 2's have Empower groups in place at these schools. Social Talk Program is also being implemented in these 5 schools as a way to support the social and emotional needs of students.

There is also a technology component to this project. WRDSB has purchased Lexia Licenses for those schools. The 5 schools have identified 5 other students who would benefit from a reading intervention and the Lexia Software aligns with the Empower Reading Program. As we learn more from this research project this software program may be implemented into more schools within the WRDSB.

Ontario Autism Program grant – the WRDSB received close to \$200,000. Will be hiring an ABA transitions leader to support influx of IBI students. Hiring an additional ABA transition leader to be part of team to support autistic students that are presenting with difficult to serve

behaviours. We have this grant money for 2 years with the hope that it may become part of our budget in the future.

Question: When can families engage in discussions with IEP's and IPRC's? IPRC's happen in spring but doesn't mean dialogue can't begin now. Please encourage any families to have these discussions any time with their schools. Typically IEP's happen in fall, or end of term 1 and end of year- discussions are scheduled. But if there are ongoing concerns, conversations should start with the classroom teacher then the resource teacher, principal and then the Family of Schools Superintendent.

Every IEP needs to have a transition plan - WRDSB is compliant with PPM156.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – a discussion paper has been developed and will be shared with SEAC.

Well-Being Focus – power point presentation. A number of people attended a provincial well-being session in November (Scott, Angela, community members,).

Why focus on student well-being? Looking at inclusion, students feeling safe, social belonging (*See attachment Well Being Discussion Document.pdf and Well Being Engagement Paper.pdf*) [Ontario's Well-being Strategy for Education: Discussion Document](http://ontario.ca/studentwellbeing)ontario.ca/studentwellbeing - student well-being- engagement portal to take a survey and provide feedback.

Broke off into small discussion groups and discussed the following questions: What does student well-being mean to you personally and your organization? What does student well-being look like, sound like and feel like? What would tell you/show you that progress is being made in promoting and supporting student well-being in the WRDSB? As a school board, what should we look for as evidence to determine if we have been successful in promoting and supporting student well-being?

The feedback will be collated and brought to next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

A Tupling, Carizon representative, will end her term on SEAC as of this month (maternity leave). We wish Amy all the best for the future. Sherry Popovich will continue as representative for Carizon and Meagan Minott will be alternate.

K. Pryke, ABC, presented a concern from a parent in her association and a very involved parent on the Safe and Inclusive School Committee in regards to an “anti-bullying” program being used at a WRDSB School. S. Miller responded to the inquiry, indicating that there are a variety of philosophies that are offered to schools regarding anti-bullying. Anti-bullying is a common terminology used in schools and community. A comprehensive list of resources that the WRDSB uses to support character education in schools will be developed for the January SEAC Meeting meeting.

ROUND TABLE ASSOCIATION REPORTS

See attached

- Dreaming of Summer
- 2016 School Board Communication

TRUSTEE REPORT

Elections were held at December's Board meeting. Scott McMillan has been voted as Chairperson and Ted Martin is Co-chair.

CHAIR REPORT

Due to inclement weather, our seasonal get together has been postponed until after the January meeting. Information will be sent out with the agenda.

A Sider has summarized the ideas presented for agenda items and has tried to plot them into a timeline between now and June, with the intention of being transparent with planning. Feedback is always welcome and encouraged. Please send any questions/concerns ahead of the SEAC meetings.

The following is a tentative list for agenda items;

- January - Barb Ward will provide an update on Mental Health
- February - Consultants to discuss transitions (still to confirm)
- March - IPRC process
- April - Training for staff, Budget feedback
- May and June - Spec Ed Plan, Looking forward

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next SEAC meeting date is **Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the **St. Jacobs Learning Hub (Bldg 1)**, Education Centre.

ADJOURNMENT

4. Moved by D. Clelland, seconded by S. Taylor:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.