



Special Education Advisory Committee

February 8, 2017

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 7:00 pm, in the St Jacobs Learning Hub, Education Centre, with the following members in attendance:

- Trustee members: John Hendry, Cindy Watson
 - Association Members: Tina Blanchette, Janine Oosterveld, Kris Pryke, Angela Sider, Katherine Waybrant
 - Association Alternates: Sophia Catania, Marianne Domm, Molly Fortier, Amanda Schultz, Faye Zevenbergen
 - Non-Association Members: Meagan Minott, Sherri Popovich, Carmen Sutherland
- Board Staff in attendance: Cindy Benedetti, Matthew Gerard, Scott R Miller, Karin Sonnenberg,
Regrets: Colleen Borman, Kristina Campbell, Jenn Checkley, Dawn Clelland, Stuart Cross, Mary Cunningham, Shannon Taylor

Call to Order

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

Approval of Agenda

Moved by J. Oosterveld, seconded by C. Sutherland:

That the agenda of the February 8, 2017 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

Carried

Approval of Minutes

Moved by A. Schultz, seconded by T. Blanchette:

That the minutes of the January 11, 2017, Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

Election rules- Each SEAC has its own terms of reference for elections. S. Miller apologized for how the selection of chair and co-chair took place at last month's meeting and will ensure the terms of reference are followed more closely for next year's election. SEAC membership did unanimously vote to retain the chair and co-chair for another year. A question was posed as to why the elections are in January, not in September? As a SEAC we have the right to change our terms of reference and as a result a suggestion was made to look at the election dates and the possibility of a two year term.

Special Education Update

October Report update - S. Miller, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, meets with Special Ed Consultants every month. Next Monday, they are meeting and will do an audit of the all the classrooms and report the findings at the next meeting. A discussion took place regarding the collection of accurate data. It was felt that the OnSIS Report is an opportunity for the board to realize goals but this data is not changing. What needs to happen so the conversation looks different next year? Does the IPRC process need to change? How are changes to the IEP reflected in the IPRC? Need to define what exactly inclusion means. Does SEAC need to look at past goals and set new goals, as a result of this data? Are there practical ways/recommendations to give to parents to get the message out regarding inclusion? A professional development day later in February for secondary administration and special education department heads has been planned to talk about these issues.

Ministry of Education Well-Being Engagement Strategy Follow up - a handout was provided about student well-being and the responses that were given to the questions asked. The ministry is asking that this information be submitted to them for review. Members discussed these points with the group and made suggestions. Might be of interest to have Peter Rubenschuh, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, come to a meeting to discuss safe schools survey.

EQAO Results - 2007 to present EQAO data. Will move this forward to possibly the March meeting or share this information with members.

WRDSB Special Education Plan – As part of a yearly review a portion of the Special Education Plan is looked at in depth. Interested SEAC Members are asked email Karin Sonnenberg if they would like to work through this process with C. Benedetti, System Administrator.

SEAC Vision, Guiding Principles Document, Next Steps - this will be included in the Special Education Plan this year and replace the forward thinking information in section 19 of the plan. Members broke off into groups to discuss the guiding principles and establish a plan to generate recommendations in regards to this document. If you are interested in being part of a working group, please email Karin Sonnenberg.

Guest Speaker

Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent Business Services and Treasurer, presented a PowerPoint about the 2017 budget and how it relates to special education. Budget highlights were provided. The presentation will be attached to the minutes. Financial statements are available on the board website. M. Gerard fielded questions/comments. WRDSB Budget Survey will be available mid February 2017 (after Family day). Please complete the survey yourself and encourage others in your association to do so.

Other Business

M. Domm attended the Equity and Inclusion Board meeting on January 25, 2017. S. Miller spoke about special education and accessibility and M. Domm spoke on behalf of

SEAC. One of the speakers was a School Resource Officer and he spoke about communicating to the congregated classes at schools. All resource officers need to make an effort and take a responsibility to speak to these students.

Round Table Association Reports

Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada - The Wellington-Waterloo chapter of Tourette Canada hosted a speaker on January 26, 2017 on the topic of PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuro-psychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal infections). This occurs when strep infection triggers a misdirected immune response, resulting in symptoms associated with anxiety, ocd, tics, etc.

On Sunday, February 12, 2017, the chapter invites families to participate in a social event - an indoor mini-golf at Max's Sports World.

On Sunday, March 26, 2017, families will be walking and raising awareness and donations for Tourette Syndrome in a number of cities across Canada by participating in the 5km Trek for Tourette. This walk is at the end of March because, like Tourette Syndrome and the unpredictable nature of its symptoms, the weather can be unpredictable, yet together we can face this challenge.

Additional great news- Faye Zevenbergen is the facilitator for the mom's group (nationally) that meets virtually online every Monday night for Tourette Canada. This is an excellent way to connect those in locations where a Tourette chapter doesn't exist and is convenient for busy moms who can connect via Zoom to discuss the challenges and strategies for their child.

Trustee Report

Trustee Watson informed members that the new purpose statement for the Waterloo Region District School Board is "Innovating Tomorrow by Educating Today".

Chair Report

The results of the discussion around SEAC Vision and Guiding Principles will be compiled and presented at the next meeting. Meanwhile a working group/steering committee will be organized to further discuss the subject. If interested, please email Karin Sonnenberg.

Date of Next Meeting

The next SEAC meeting date is Wednesday, March 8, 7:00 pm in the St. Jacobs Learning Hub, Education Centre.

Adjournment

Moved by M. Fortier, seconded by S. Catania:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.