



# Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - December 9, 2020

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

**Trustees:** Kathi Smith, Cindy Watson

**Association Members:** Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Angela Geddes (FASD ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Janine Oosterveld (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society), Sara Penny (Epilepsy South Central Ontario), Angela Sider (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), Kathy Waybrant (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy)

**Association Alternates:** Jane Martin (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Kathy Moreland (FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Shannon Taylor (Epilepsy South Central Ontario)

**Non-Association Members:** Carmen Sutherland (Waterloo Region Family Network)

**Board Staff in Attendance:** Cindy Benedetti (System Administrator), Leonilda Gil (Administrative Assistant), Scott Miller (Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being)

**Guests:** Barbara Ward (WRDSB Mental Health Lead)

**Regrets:** Tina Blanchette (Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada), Josh Brenn (Carizon Family & Community Services), Sharon Hutton (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), Kris Pryke (Association for Bright Children of Ontario)

## **Call to Order**

Sara Penny called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

## **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Kathy Moreland, seconded by Carmen Sutherland:

That the agenda of the December 9, 2020 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Janine Oosterveld, seconded by Angela Geddes:

That the minutes of the November 11, 2020 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Business Arising from the Minutes**

- None

## **Mental Health Presentation - Barbara Ward (WRDSB Mental Health Lead)**

- [Mental Health Strategy Update Presentation](#) Overview:
  - How to be Alone: A Focus on Resiliency in a Pandemic
  - School Mental Health Ontario - Goals Across the 3 Tiers
  - Tiered Support System of Care
  - Aligned and Integrated Model (AIM) for School Mental Health & Well-Being
  - Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3
  - How do I become Trauma-Informed?
  - Community & Caregiver Collaboration
  - Family Resources
  - Staff Support

- Weekly mindfulness sessions with teachers are being held
- Virtual office hours are being provided by WRDSB Psychologists with teachers in the distance learning
- Teachers are participating in lunch and learns with parents
- Proactive approaches to support our students and engage parents through WRDSB Social Workers
- Special Education staff meet regularly with the distance learning teachers to help support students who haven't been engaging in learning

### **Special Education Update – Scott Miller**

- [CBC Video - This is Me](#) A London, Ont. music teacher led her students in an uplifting performance
- Staffing Update
  - Received Special Education Covid Relief Funding which which has supported additional Mental Health Supports:
    - Staff Training
    - Psychologist
    - Social Worker
    - Itinerant Teacher to support trauma informed practices
    - Behaviour Management System - 2 Trainers
    - System Navigator Positions (This role will support community connections and collaborative work between families/caregivers, community agencies and the WRDSB)
- In-Person and Distance Learning Update
  - Home School resources and Multi Disciplinary Teams are being used to work with in person and distance learning students
  - A student support process has been developed to support Distance Learning Teachers and Students
  - Special Education Consultant Staff and Special Education Resources Teachers have been allocated to Distance Learning

## Chair Report - Sara Penny

- We have a new SEAC email [seac@wrdsb.ca](mailto:seac@wrdsb.ca)
- Template letters requesting participation to join SEAC have been updated with new email. Will get an update in January regarding connections made as follows:
  - Anglea Sider to reach out to Learning Disabilities
  - Carmen Sutherland can connect with Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group
- If you are interested in presenting at one of our meetings on behalf of your association, contact Sara and we can add you to a future meeting agenda

## Trustee Report

- Joanne Weston elected as Chair and Scott Piatkowski elected as Vice-Chair at the Inaugural Board Meeting on December 7, 2020

## Round Table Association Reports

1. Jenn Checkley, Easter Seals - [Camp E-aster Seals 2020](#) Winter virtual camp running from December 18-23, registration deadline is December 16.
2. Angela Geddes, FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
  - The [FASD Family / Caregiver Support Group Project](#). It is important to note that the prevalence rate for FASD is low estimated at 4-5% which is higher than ASD (1.52%), CP (2.1%), Down's Syndrome (0.14%) and Tourette's syndrome (0.10%) combined. We also know that most people do not realize that they or their children may be struggling due to prenatal exposure to alcohol. As a result, the support that is offered through government FASD initiatives are meant to include people who may not have a diagnosis but may be experiencing challenges related to concentration, impulse control, sleep, memory and academic achievement for examples that could be related to PAE. **Your parent group efforts could qualify for these subsidies if you are interested as long as they would be inclusive and adequately supportive of**

**caregivers experiencing the complexities of raising a child with learning and mental health challenges and or complex neurodevelopmental disability which would include, ADHD, FASD.**

- ***The provincial FASD website***, which is full of up to date news, information and resources for educators, practitioners, individuals affected, and parents/caregivers. <https://www.fasdinfectsaf.ca/en/>
  - Under development – ***Broad, cross sectorial FASD service provider training***. Coming March 2021.
  - [Ontario FASD Bill 172](#) passed the second reading which is so important for our education and early childhood sectors.
3. Kathy Waybrant & Jane Martin, Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy
- Virtual gala held on November 27 was very successful
  - Check out website with updated information <https://www.ofcp.ca/> on webinars and supports for families
4. Janine Oosterveld, Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society
- [2021 calendar](#) is now available and can be purchased on the website
  - Amy Dibben has resigned from SEAC as an alternate member
5. Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network
- WRFN is honoured and excited to have been accepted as a member of Cohort 2 for the Lyle S. Hallman General Operating Support pilot program. We look forward to learning along with the other cohort members over the next three years. General Operating Support will allow us to build capacity and strengthen our organization to achieve greater mission alignment and impact.
6. Sara Penny, Epilepsy South Central Ontario
- [Gift Wrap for Epilepsy](#) at Conestoga Mall Waterloo Dec 1-24

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next SEAC meeting date is January 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Moved by Angela Sider, seconded by Jenn Checkley:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.