



# Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - January 13, 2021

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

**Trustees:** Kathi Smith, Cindy Watson

**Association Members:** Tina Blanchette (Tourette Syndrome Foundation of Canada), Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Sharon Hutton (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), 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:** 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:** Dana Liebermann (WRDSB Senior Manager, Research and Evidence-based Practice), David Lane (WRDSB Research Strategist), Peter Rubenschuh (WRDSB Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being)

**Regrets:** Angela Geddes (FASD ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Jane Martin (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Janine

Oosterveld (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society), 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 Shannon Taylor, seconded by Kathy Waybrant:  
That the agenda of the January 13, 2021 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Shannon Taylor, seconded by Carmen Sutherland:  
That the minutes of the December 9, 2020 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Business Arising from the Minutes**

- None

## **Student Census: Dana Liebermann, Senior Manager, Research and Evidence-based Practice & David Lane, Research Strategist**

- [Research SEAC Consultation Presentation](#) Overview:
  - What is the Student Census?
  - Why are we conducting a Student Census?
  - What questions are included on the Student Census?
  - How will we protect students' personal information?
  - How will census be conducted?
  - List of informational materials to be shared
  - Response rates

- What will we do with the results?
- Reviewing key questions - group discussion for suggested changes to question “Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability or health condition? If yes, you may select any of the choices below that apply to you”:
  - Change to “select as many of these choices below that apply to you”
  - Include yes but prefer not to disclose
  - ADHD as a separate category or under mental health
  - Include tourettes under mental health
  - Under medical include airway management & feed tube
  - Under intellectual or cognitive add perceptual, gifted, bright
  - Include neurodevelopmental issues as an option
  - List psychosis under mental health
- Discussion - L. Gil to send google form with two questions to the group for further input:
  1. What support will students with disabilities and health conditions require in order to complete the census?
  2. What resources and approaches can we mobilize to ensure that all students have the opportunity to fully participate in the census?

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

- Return to School (January 2021)
  - Almost all WRDSB students are still at home learning on-line
  - The Ministry of Education mandated that school boards would provide in-person learning opportunities for students with complex Special Education Needs
  - WRDSB Special Education Students in the elementary and secondary Ace Classes had the opportunity to attend in-person learning beginning on January 11, 2021

- We will continue to provide in-person learning for the students in these classes and they will stay open throughout the stay-at-home order. The attendance of students in the ACE Program has stayed fairly consistent with what we were experiencing prior to the December break
  - Concerns from staff, parents, community members have been received
  - Waiting until January 20th to hear from the Ministry if the closure of schools will continue
  - There was concern that devices weren't sent home before the holidays with students but we have been able to deploy equipment to all students that require technology
  - Section 23 Students (ECCP - Education Community Partnership Programs), Students in WRDSB supported programs now have WRDSB google accounts, access to our virtual library and devices
  - WRDSB has received grant money to help support ECCP with technology
- SEAC Chair - Sara Penny will continue as Chair for another year. The Vice Chair position is still available, advise if you are interested in the position
  - Discussion: Breakout groups - deferred to February meeting
    - What has this year's school experience been like for students/families/caregivers in your association?

### **Chair Report - Sara Penny**

- Received a [letter from Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County](#) nominating Christine MacDonald as a representative on SEAC. Motion to add Christine MacDonald as member for Learning Disabilities Association of Waterloo/Wellington County moved by Shannon Taylor, seconded by Kathy Moreland
- Cristina Stanger representing WRFN will present at the March meeting regarding barriers for parents with children with exceptionalities to fully participate in their children's education process

- Kathy Moreland will have an association presentation on behalf of FASD/One Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in February

## **Trustee Report**

- Kathi Smith - looking at having conversations with minority students regarding current situations and experiences

## **Round Table Association Reports**

1. Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network
  - WRFN is partnering with KidsAbility and the cities to offer a virtual Camp Info Fair in early February. Watch for details coming soon!
2. Kathy Moreland, FASD/One Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
  - [Ontario FASD Bill 172](#) continuing training and education for FASD
3. Kathy Waybrant, Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy
  - [OFCP Funding Opportunities](#):
    - [Life Emergency Action Fund \(LEAF\)](#) opening January 15th
    - [Assistive Devices Funding Program \(ADFP\)](#) opening January 29

## **Date of Next Meeting**

The next SEAC meeting date is February 10, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

## **Adjournment**

Moved by Angela Sider, seconded by Kathy Waybrant:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.