



## Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - June 8, 2022

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

**Trustee:** Kathi Smith

**Association Members:** Christine MacDonald (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County), Jane Martin & Kathy Waybrant (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Sara Penny & Shannon Taylor (Epilepsy South Central Ontario), Jeff Senior & Roberta Thompson (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society)

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

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

**Regrets:** Dale Babiy (Autism Ontario), Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Michelle Hughes (FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Deb Jack (Family & Children's Services - Indigenous Services), Kristen McHardy (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), Selena Saini (WRDSB Student Representative), Cindy Watson (Trustee)

**Guests:** Teneile Warren (WRDSB Equity and Inclusion Officer)

### Call to Order

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

### Welcome & Territorial Acknowledgement - Scott Miller

Acknowledged WRDSB celebrating June as National Indigenous History Month and Pride Month.

## **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Shannon Taylor, seconded by Roberta Thompson:

That the agenda of the June 8, 2022 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Roberta Thompson, seconded by Jane Martin:

That the minutes of the May 11, 2022 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

## **Business Arising from the Minutes**

- None

## **Student Dress Policy: Teneile Warren - Equity and Inclusion Officer**

- [Presentation](#)
  - Updated to remove the word “Code” and replaced it with Student Dress “Policy”
  - Students have received a greater voice regarding the policy by providing feedback
  - The Policy is going to the board on June 20th, 2022

## **WRDSB Special Education & Student Well-Being Report – Scott Miller**

- Right to Read Update
  - We will be providing training for our staff
  - The Right to Read Report is a call to action and has 157 recommendations
  - Focuses on the “Big 5” which are the essential reading components that include phonics, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension

- Considering how we use our Speech Language Pathologists to support students
- We are building “sound walls” instead of “word walls”
- Some schools have a greater need than others
- We have 38 teachers allocated as Reading Resource Teachers who will be embedded in schools will assist with the implementation of the Empower Program in grade 2
- The Resource Teachers will be able to provide in classroom support, instruction and small groups work
- There are central staff including program leads, equity/special education/program consultants that are registered for the Introduction to Structured Literacy Instruction Course being provided by International Dyslexia Association Ontario. ACE consultants are included in the training and will support students in the ACE classrooms.
- The Board continues to look at next year. Looking at a universal screener which allows students to engage. We are able to do further assessments to assist at-risk students. We can provide interventions to allow students to stay with their peers.
- [SEAC Feedback - Equity and Sovereignty Leadership Competencies](#)
  - Document would be supported by training and engagement
  - We provide opportunities for system leaders to acquire these competencies so when they come to the interview, we expect them to be able to speak to that
  - Training or professional development associated will be part of the implementation
  - These competencies will be used as a guide to elevate awareness and support system leaders in their capacity building, Superintendents, principals, vice principals and managers
- Planning for 2022-2023 and Reflecting on 2021-2022
  - New Strategic Plan is in process

- Our North Star “To ensure that identity and social location no longer predict outcomes, TOGETHER we will transform our systems, structures, physical environments and practices to center the needs, lived experiences, abilities, and stories for students and staff to ensure success for ALL”
- Continue to use this to help center the work that we all do
- This is something to celebrate as its the feedback from all groups
- It's a reflection on the work that we have had the last couple of years and how we move forward

## Chair Report

- [Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB Letter to Ministry](#) Re: Nursing Shortage
- [York Catholic DSB Letter to Ministry](#) Re: Nursing Shortage
  - Reviewed letters and will send a letter in support for both Boards regarding the nursing shortage
- [York Catholic DSB Letter to Ministry](#) Re: Special Incidence Portion Claim
  - SIP is a small piece of our funding. We get most of our money per pupil funding and some of that money goes towards special education support.
  - Suggested to have a further discussion in September regarding the breakdown of funding the board receives so we can understand the letter better and provide a response.
- [Upper Grand DSB Letter to Ministry](#) Re: Policy/Program Memorandum 81
  - Messages came from the Ministry in the new year which provided various questions. A lot of the implementation has been put on hold due to the consultation and feedback they have received. The Ministry of Health and Education are continuing to review and this is on pause for now. There will be no changes to the current practice for the next school year.
  - Reviewed letters and no further action to be taken
- SEAC Handbook Draft Copy (Group Discussion)
  - The current handbook is on the website and is meant to provide guidance to SEAC members

- Discussed having two separate documents for the public and SEAC members to provide as a reference guide
- Advocate for simpler language and make it accessible to all
- Edit to provide headers, pictures and easier reading, bullets instead of long paragraphs, do a slide presentation instead. Get volunteers to have a small group to work on this and bring it back to the group. If anyone is interested, please let us know.
- Testimonials would provide support and trust for the families to connect. Encouraged members to write testimonials and provide them in the fall to be added on the SEAC website.
- Goals for next year are to be more accessible to parents and provide mentorship

## **Trustee Report - Kathi Smith**

- None

## **Round Table Association Reports**

1. Roberta Thompson, Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society
  - Will be running a silent auction fundraiser in place of the Golf tournament
  - Any Which Way fundraiser in September
  - Kitchener Public Library Summer Reading Programs. Check website for more information <https://www.kpl.org/children/summer>
2. Jane Martin, Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy
  - Recommendation of We Move Together book by author-illustrator Kelly Fritsch, Anne McGuire & Eduardo Trejos. It's about sharing some of the gifts we have received by being lucky enough to be part of disability culture and community as disabled people, disability studies scholars, and disability activities. We Move Together is a bold and colourful exploration of all the ways that people navigate through the spaces around them and a celebration of the relationships we build along the way. We Move Together follows a mixed-ability group of kids as they

creatively negotiate everyday barriers and find joy and connection in disability culture and community. Find out more here:

<https://wemovetogether.ca/>

3. Christine MacDonald, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County
  - All the programs have wound down for the summer
  - We are waiting to hear from the Upper Grand District School Board if we will receive funding to run the reading program this summer

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next SEAC meeting date is September 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

Moved by Roberta Thompson, seconded by Shannon Taylor:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.