



# Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - June 9, 2021

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, June 9, 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), 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:** Sharon Hutton (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), 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)

**Guest:** Deb Jack (Family & Children's Services - Indigenous Services)

**Regrets:** Angela Geddes (FASD ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Jane Martin (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Christine MacDonald (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County)

## **Call to Order**

Scott Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

## **Welcome & Territorial Acknowledgement**

### **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by Carmen Sutherland, seconded by Kathy Moreland:

That the agenda of the May 12, 2021 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

- Carried -

### **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Shannon Taylor, seconded by Janine Oosterveld:

That the minutes of the May 12, 2021 meeting, Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

- None

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

- [The Noise of School](#) by Trevor Muir
- Ministry Of Education Update
  - We currently have no direction from the Ministry as to what September will look like.
  - Our hope is to have everyone back to school in person.
  - We are assuming the same protocols will be in place with personal protective equipment (PPE), physical distancing.
  - Finalizing what secondary will look like for the quadmester or semester schedule.

- Student Trustees put forth a motion to use semester schedule as opposed to quadmester.
- Received funding to support Indigenous and Black Education.
- Received funding for reading, reengagement, system navigator and additional speech and language staff.
- Waiting for additional funding for junior math pilots to provide opportunities for any gaps students have had this past year.
- Continue to have in person learning in our ACE classes - the last day of in-person is June 25th.
- Summer programming - finalizing mental health workers, social workers and psychologists working with community partners (Carizon and Lutherwood).
- During recent board meeting, there was discussion regarding a student/family helpline, wherein students would be contacted within 48 hours to receive support.
- Numbers are up for summer learning programs.
- WRDSB Trauma Informed Approach to Returning to School
  - A Brightspace (D2L) course focusing on a trauma-based approach has been developed and available to all staff that work with students. Training and professional development will be available for the beginning of the school year to all staff.
  - The course contains six modules:
    1. Foundations of Trauma Informed Practices
    2. Establishing Connections
    3. Being Predictable and Being Flexible
    4. Delighting in your Students
    5. Co-Regulating
    6. Trauma Connections to Equity and Racism

- WRDSB Social Emotional Learning Update
  - Elementary teachers and students are engaging in this learning together.
  - Currently building on secondary course.
- WRDSB Budget Update (2021-2022)
  - Staff positions previously funded through yearly grants will now be funded through Grants for Student Needs (GSN) which will allow these positions to become permanent.
  - Paraprofessional supports have stayed consistent.
  - Will be working on changing the name Section 23 program to align with the Ministry - Education Community Partnership Programs (ECCP).
  - Have received new funding to be able to provide technology support to ECCP Programs.

## **Chair Report - Sara Penny**

- The Year in Review - Reflections and Feedback
  - Things that we would like to start doing at SEAC meetings:
    - Create an introduction package for new members and update the website.
    - Inviting Student Trustees to attend meetings to provide student voice.
    - First day student packages have more information about SEAC.
    - Update Special Education Plan.
    - Provide feedback on policy and procedures.
    - Connect with the Parent Involvement Committee who facilitates the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant to get involved with presentations and workshops.
    - Guest speakers from Indigenous, Muslim, Black Communities, OneRoof or Safe Haven youth to engage in conversation.
    - Review IEP process, special education planning, transition for post-secondary.

- Discussion around what worked and didn't work for students and families during the pandemic.
  - Things that we would like to continue doing at SEAC meetings:
    - Presentations from parents on their personal experiences with their child. Make parents feel heard when being able to speak to our group.
    - Having virtual meetings available to provide more flexibility for members.
    - Association presentations.
    - Receiving meeting updates when members are unable to attend.
  - [Renfrew County CDSB Letter to MOE Re: Support of Bill 172](#)
  - [Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB Letter to MOE Re: Support of Bill 172](#)
    - Reviewed letters and members agreed to send a letter in support of Bill 172 on behalf of SEAC. Sara Penny to draft a letter to be reviewed by members before sending.
- <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-42/session-1/bill-172>

## **Trustee Report**

- Cindy Watson - Suspension and expulsion committee advocating for more information on the process and types of exceptionalities in students. Writing a letter to the Ministry to ask for more detailed information. Advocating with Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) and other SEACs. Will review again in September once we have more information.
- Kathi Smith - Trustees will be assisting with the interview process for the new Director next week.

## **Round Table Association Reports**

1. Kathy Moreland, FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
  - Angela Geddes has moved out of the region. Michelle Hughes will be the new primary member.

- Bill 172 continues to be a hot issue. Recommended to speak to your PMMs.
  - International Harm Reduction Day on August 31st. Light a candle in memory of the lives lost.
2. Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network
- Great response to the Transition to High School for Students with Individual Education Plans information session held in May.
  - The Evening of Elegance Fundraiser was a success.
3. Angela Sider (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region)
- Webinar on Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Well-being of teens was well attended. Received feedback for interest in this webinar from other school boards.
  - Looking at making the Parenting Essentials Webinar a series of youtube videos.
4. Janine Oosterveld (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society)
- Training inclusion support for camp for summer workers. Working with the City of Kitchener and will be putting together a recording to help support training.
  - [CDSS Walk for Awareness Fundraiser](#) for National Literacy Program June 12-20, 2021

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next SEAC meeting date is September 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

## **Adjournment**

Moved by Kathy Moreland, seconded by Angela Sider:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.