



Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - March 8, 2023

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Trustee: Fred Meissner & Marie Snyder

Association Members: Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Christine MacDonald (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County), Sara Penny & Shannon Taylor (Epilepsy South Central Ontario), Jeff Senior & Roberta Thompson (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society), Huseyin Unver (YMCA of Three Rivers), Kathy Waybrant (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy)

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

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

Guest: Gwenyth Le-Phuong (WRDSB Mental Health Lead)

Regrets: Lisa Bonnell (Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children), Michelle Hughes (FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Jane Martin (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy)

Call to Order

Jodi Albrecht called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Welcome & Territorial Acknowledgement - Jodi Albrecht

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Carmen Sutherland, seconded by Roberta Thompson:
That the agenda of the March 8, 2023 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Fred Meissner, seconded by Shannon Taylor:

That the minutes of the February 8, 2023 meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, be approved.

- Carried -

Business Arising from the Minutes

- None

Mental Health Presentation - Gwennyth Le-Phuong, Mental Health Lead

- [SEAC Mental Health Presentation](#)
 - Since the pandemic there is a difference in students' well-being, social and emotional skills. Students missed school opportunities and need to grieve these losses.
 - There is a need to reteach behaviors, structure and support mental health
 - It's important to have transition plans for students when staff changes occur. Oftentimes students struggle with changes to their routine which affects the students.
 - Students with special education needs often feel isolated and left out of activities in and out of the school environment. We need to create intentional opportunities for kids to be social and included.
 - Supporting all students and allowing them to do things on their own in order for them to be able to deal with good and bad stressful situations.

Policies for Committee Consultation

- Members reviewed the policies with feedback being provided which will be shared with the Policy Working Group by L. Gil.
 - [3007 - Membership in OPSBA](#)
 - Related References: OPSBA Constitution and Bylaws - Link doesn't work
 - [4007 - Approval of Research Projects](#)
 - 1.1.4 - correct spelling of armlegislation to arm legislation
 - Updating the reference of families/caregivers throughout the document
 - 2.1.2 - can language around students with disabilities providing consent be added or is this part of the informed consent?
 - [4019 - WCSSAA](#)
 - 2.2.4 - Can we include making sure that facilities are accessible when holding events to allow students to participate and if families want to attend?
 - [G100 - Governance Policy - Foundations](#) - No suggested changes

WRDSB Special Education & Student Well-Being Report - Jodi Albrecht

- Labour Update - nothing new to report
- Updates
 - Integrated Support Program (ISP)
 - Last month we discussed closing the Integrated Support Program (ISP) which is currently located at Westvale Public School, Woodland Park Public School, Queensmount Public School and Kitchener Collegiate Institute. We received lots of feedback and the Board has decided to continue offering the program. Referrals for the programs that support students from grade 5-8 will be accepted until March 31, 2023.

Chair Report

- Website updates
 - The working group will be meeting on March 9th, 2023 and will provide updates at the next meeting
- Letters
 - Recruitment Letters have been created for student ambassadors for SEAC to secure participants for the next school year. L. Gil will send the letters to members for review and feedback.

Trustee Report - Fred Meissner & Marie Snyder

- M. Snyder - The Board meeting on March 6th, 2023 was a powerful and impactful meeting hearing from delegates regarding the Integrated Support Program (ISP). Suggest agenda item for future meeting - how do we integrate students well in our school programs?
- F. Meissner - During the March 6th, 2023 meeting, there were 2 letters that were sent to the Ministry and were reviewed regarding the funding of Special Incidence Portion (SIP) from Greater Essex County DSB and Avon Maitland DSB. L. Gil to get a copy to review at the April meeting.

Round Table Association Reports

1. Jennifer Checkley, Easter Seals
 - March is Easter Seals Month and Announcement of New 2023 Ambassadors. See [link](#) for more information.
 - TD Secure Futures Virtual Workshops. See [link](#) for more information.
 - [Letter to School Boards](#) Re: National AccessAbility Week May 28-June 3, 2023
 - [Red Shirt Day](#) - Wear Red, make a pledge, support Canadians living with disabilities on May 31, 2023
2. Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network (WRFN)
 - Acknowledging the Sibling Experience Workshops March 22-May 3, 2023 at the Downtown Community Centre. See [poster](#) for more information.

3. Huseyin Unver, YMCA of Three Rivers
 - International Women's Day - March 8, 2023
 - Women's Only Swim - see [letter](#) for more information
 - Investing in Women's Futures - see [poster](#) for more information
4. Roberta Thompson, Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society
 - March 21, 2023 is World Down Syndrome Day. Lots of events happening to celebrate - see [website](#) for more details.
5. Sara Penny - Epilepsy South Central Ontario
 - On Sunday March 26th at 2-4 p.m. we will be hosting our first ever Epilepsy Awareness Kick off in Waterloo Region!
 - We're happy to announce that we are teaming up with Victoria Bowling Lanes in Kitchener to bring you an afternoon of fun and entertainment! It's a great time for anyone with an interest in epilepsy to help raise awareness, connect with others in the community, challenge myths and help dismantle the stigma of epilepsy in Waterloo region. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.trellis.org/bowling-for-epilepsy. Tickets are limited so sign up today!
 - [Wear Purple Day](#) to support Epilepsy Around the World

Questions you're hearing from schools

- None

Date of Next Meeting

The next SEAC meeting date is April 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Moved by Roberta Thompson, seconded by Jennifer Checkley:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

- Carried -

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.