



Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes - September 14, 2022

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was held virtually on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. with the following members in attendance:

Trustee: Cindy Watson

Association Members: Michelle Hughes (FASD/ONE Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise), Christine MacDonald (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County), Jane Martin & Kathy Waybrant (Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy), Roberta Thompson (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society)

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), Scott Miller (Associate Director)

Regrets: Dale Babiy (Autism Ontario), Jennifer Checkley (Easter Seals), Deb Jack (Family & Children's Services - Indigenous Services), Erin Legary & Kristen McHardy (Parents For Children's Mental Health - Waterloo Region), Sara Penny & Shannon Taylor (Epilepsy South Central Ontario), Jeff Senior (Waterloo Wellington Down Syndrome Society), Kathi Smith (Trustee)

Call to Order

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

Welcome - Scott Miller

- Lila Read, Associate Director, will be retiring as of September 30th, 2022. Scott Miller has been appointed as Associate Director as of September 1st, 2022. Jodi Abrecht, Superintendent, will be taking over the Special Education portfolio.

Territorial Acknowledgement - Jodi Albrecht

Approval of Agenda

- Unable to approve the September 14, 2022 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting agenda due to not having quorum

Approval of Minutes

- Unable to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2022 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting due to not having quorum. Will be deferred to the next meeting on October 12, 2022 for approval.

Business Arising from the Minutes

- None

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

- Meetings are still being held virtually but there will be the opportunity in the future to have a hybrid model
- Due to the cyber attack, transportation for some of our special education students didn't start until September 12th. We did advocate for our students to get transportation and appreciate all the hard work Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) has done to set-up the transportation.
- Round table introductions from all members
- [WRDSB Strategic Plan](#)
 - Trustees, parents, students, staff and community voice provided feedback through a survey to assist with input for the new strategic plan
 - There will be continued work on the plan as it evolves
 - Director of Education jeewan chanicka [Response to Strategic Plan](#)
 - [Learner Profiles](#)
- Ministry of Education Update
 - We will receive additional funding for autism entry to school program
 - Our Board is following some of the recommendations of the Right to Read Report and the Ministry guide to early literacy to implement a number of supports for our students.

- The consultants in Special Education, Curriculum and Indigenous, Equity & Human Rights are taking courses on structured literacy
- 38 Reading Resource Teachers are engaged in learning to do high level interventions to support students in classrooms
- Additional licenses have been added to schools for the Lexia Reading Intervention Program
- There has been a lot of work around functional literacy in the ACE Program and will continue this work with the students
- [WRDSB SEAC Vision and Guiding Principles](#)

Chair Report

- [Upper Canada DSB Letter to Ministry](#) Re: PPM 81
 - Reviewed letter and no action required
- Reflections from the 2021-2022 School Year
 - Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)
 - Requested feedback from SEAC members to be added to the [Communication: Collaborating with the Community form](#) due by October 4th, 2022. L. Gil to send to all members for their input.
- Goals for the 2022-2023 School Year
 - Biggest challenges have been hiring Paraprofessionals - Educational Assistants and Child Youth Workers as we try to fill in the gaps
- Discussion - Secondary ACE Classes
 - Concerns brought forward by Jane Martin, representative of Ontario Federation of Cerebral Palsy regarding the lack of EAs and fail to fills in high schools
 - The students in the classes are ACE Medically Fragile, ACE Autism and ACE Developmentally Challenged with multiple exceptionalities
 - Currently a suggested rotating EA schedule is being proposed
 - There is concern over the EAs not knowing the student and being able to support the students as they have high needs. Safety has to be first and the EA needs a special skill set to support the students.

- Recommends keeping 2 permanent EAs in the class and rotate the 3rd
- Concern that parents haven't been consulted about this new routine
- Masking is also a safety concern as the students can't wear masks and the staff is not required to wear a mask
- Parents feel disconnected and isolated from other parents as the students are from all over the region. Would like to look into connecting with the families after school which would provide the opportunity to support each other. Would like to see what other SEACs and schools are doing to have families connect and support each other outside of school
- J. Albrecht and S. McCrae will follow-up with J. Martin to investigate further with the high school

Trustee Report - Cindy Watson

- None

Round Table Association Reports

1. Carmen Sutherland, Waterloo Region Family Network
 - WRFN / WRDSB / WCDSB [IEP Workshop](#) on September 28, 2022 at the WRDSB Education Center at 6:30 p.m.

Date of Next Meeting

The next SEAC meeting date is October 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

- Unable to approve the adjournment of the meeting due to not having quorum

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.