

Upper Grand District School Board  
**Special Education Advisory Committee**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday, June 8, 2016**

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, June 8, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph.

**The following Association Members were present:** Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC (teleconference), Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada, Carole Craig, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario), Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County, Sue Shaw, Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario), Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

**Present from Staff were:** Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program, Cheryl Van Ooteghem, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program, Trudy Counter, Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech Services

**Trustees Present:** Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Linda Busuttil

**Public:** Monica Chamberlain

**Regrets:** Wendy McIntosh-Clodd, Secondary Vice-Principal

**Absent:** Audra Cook, Secondary Vice-Principal, Dr. Mary Susan Crawford, Chief Psychologist, Christine Kay, Principal, Special Education Consultants, Jackie Speers, Jacqueline Foster, Mark Howe, Kyla Lightfoot, Ben McCabe, Kim Cozzolino, Jacqueline Weresch, Debbie Snow, Kathy Green, John Potocska, OSSTF

Carrie Proudfoot, Chair of SEAC called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Agenda June 8, 2016**

Carole Craig moved that the agenda of June 8, 2016 meeting be approved. Sharon Dills seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

**Approval of Minutes of May 11, 2016**

Sharon Dills moved that the minutes of May 11, 2016 be approved. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

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Don Richardson questioned the process of posting Board meeting minutes to the UGDSB website prior to being approved. How are the changes reflected? Linda Busuttill responded that there is a process and that the minutes are first received at the Board meeting and then brought to SEAC for review and approval before being posted.

Don Richardson asked that it be recorded in the minutes that in his view it is unacceptable that we are receiving the Special Education Plan and Report for review a week prior to the June meeting when we were told it was coming two months prior. This is not an appropriate timeframe to review this material and comment on the contents.

### Action Items

Tracey Lindsay provided updates to the following action items:

- Annual Review of UGDSB Special Education Plan – draft was sent out last week and is on the agenda for review at tonight's meeting
- Draft Gifted Plan Review – to be discussed in meeting
- Special Education Audit – report is available on UGCloud in the SEAC June meeting folder and shared with SEAC.

### Correspondence

Letter dated May 12, 2016, addressed to the Honourable Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Children and Youth Services, from Linda Morrice, Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee, District School Board of Niagara, asking the Ministry to grandparent the families who are already on the wait list for Intensive Behavioural Intervention services when moving forward with the plan to reduce wait times was discussed. Carrie Proudfoot asked the committee for their input regarding this issue. Sue Shaw commented that this is addressed in the Special Education Audit Report and that SEAC first review the report before deciding on a response. Carrie Proudfoot will wait for further details before drafting the letter.

### Budget 2016-2017

Janice Wright, Superintendent of Finance, presented information regarding the Ministry's [2016-17 Guide to The Special Education Grant](#). The Guide was uploaded to the SEAC folder on UGCloud for SEAC review and the Board budget documents from the June 6, 2016 Board meeting were distributed at the meeting.

Janice Wright explained the six allocations of the Special Education Grant:

- 1- Special Education Per Pupil Amount
- 2- Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (formerly High Needs Amount)
- 3- Special Equipment Amount
- 4- Special Incidence Portion
- 5- Facilities Amount
- 6- Behaviour Expertise Amount

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The Special Education per Pupil Amount (SEPA) is allocated to school boards on the basis of the total number of students. This funding assists each board with costs associated with providing additional supports for students with special education needs.

In March of 2014, the Ministry announced a new funding approach for the Differentiated Special Education Needs (DSENA) starting in 2014-15. Under this new approach, three components have been added: Special Education Statistical Prediction Model; Measures of Variability and Base Amount for Collaboration and Integration.

The allocation of funds is being implemented over four years and UGDSB will be positively affected by the changes. The Ministry has not changed the amount of money that the province is spending for special education, only the distribution to each Board. Some boards in the Province will not receive as much of the funding as they had previously, while others will benefit from the greater amount.

Special Education Amount (SEA) has been normalized and now is reflective of the amounts that other boards in the province are receiving. The SEA amount was reduced considerably last year but is consistent this year.

The Special Incidence Portion allocation has increased yearly due to the diligent efforts of the Special Education staff. This funding is based on the number of claims submitted to the Ministry for supporting students with extraordinary high needs who require more than two full-time staff to address their health and/or safety needs.

Facilities amount is provided to boards if a Section 23 program is being offered to our students in one of our buildings. The funding is directed towards the operating the building.

The Behaviour Expertise Amount has been part of our grant for a number of years and has been consistent throughout.

Carole Craig questioned whether the decrease in the Special Equipment Amount had affected us negatively. Janice Wright responded that UGDSB had been receiving the higher amount in the past when the Ministry decided to freeze and normalize the distribution of funds. Our students have been fortunate in receiving the required equipment due to the greater amount.

Tracey Lindsay responded that due to the knowledge of the SEA decrease, the Special Education department has been putting funds aside for SEA equipment as part of our board budget. This year we purchased approximately 100 devices as backup which have been distributed to the schools. We have an ample Special Education budget and our IT department has been very forward thinking. They have provided Chromebooks to schools so if a student has not received their SEA equipment, there is still technology available to the student. Also, the turnover for claims is very quick as there is inventory at UGDSB.

Janice Wright directed the committee to the Board budget document that is available for viewing on the UGDSB website and provided a detailed overview. She thanked SEAC for

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their input to the Guiding Principles which the Board approved for the 2016-17 budget in March. She requested that the committee notify her by June 9, 2016 if there are any delegations to the Board Meeting on June 13, 2016 from SEAC.

The UGDSB Special Education grants for 2016-17 are estimated at \$46,725,317 which is an increase of 5.9% for a total of \$2,630,413 from the 2015-16 amount of \$44,094,904.

Janice Wright explained that we have a compliance requirement. All of special education funding must be spent on special education and reported back to the Ministry. We have always overspent on the grant. Our revenue is approximately \$44,000,000 and our spending is \$48,000,000.

Funding will be allocated for additional educational assistants, full-time special education resource teachers, and new staff positions in the Student Support and Program Services department. Speech Program Assistants (SPA) have been replaced by Communication Disorder Assistants (CDA) who are highly trained professionals in this area. Tracey Lindsay commented that over the last three years, a number of positions have been added to Special Education umbrella; three Specialized Mental Health Interventionists were hired last year. The Board recognizes the need for additional supports and has approved budget requests that have been submitted.

All boards have been provided with funding for the full-time position of a First Nations Metis Inuit (FNMI) lead.

Tracey Lindsay thanked Janice Wright for her presentation and wished her well on her retirement.

### **Draft Gifted Review**

The draft "UGDSB Review of Specialized Class Placement – Gifted" document was shared with SEAC. Enrolments for Gifted have been decreasing and a review of this program has been initiated. High CCAT scores is the main criteria that determines whether a child will have the option of being placed in the Gifted program. The newer version of the CCAT will be purchased and teachers will be in-serviced to administer it correctly. A communication plan will be developed to ensure that parents are aware of timelines and the required actions for each step.

Cheryl Van Ooteghem shared a preliminary draft of the Gifted review calendar which provides dates of when the process happens. This is a document for administrators to use and will be uploaded to the SEAC folder after it has been shared with administrators.

Questions regarding this draft calendar included: will there be parent reviews? Is it possible to make the meetings accessible online? Will all teachers be trained? What supports are available if there are multiple exceptionalities and child is gifted? Why is this only in elementary?

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Tracey Lindsay responded that consultations will occur throughout the summer. Changes need to be ready for September 2016 and the process will be evaluated then. Declining enrolments in elementary prompted the review. Jason Offer questioned whether a full review would be done at a later date. Tracey Lindsay replied that this would come to SEAC to determine whether it is necessary for SEAC to make this recommendation to the board. Jason Offer will be available for parental input into the review prior to September.

### **IPRC Notices/Parent Engagement**

Secondary IPRC letters were sent home to parents. Each school letter was different and in some letters, but not all, the parent engagement piece was not clearly specified. A form letter will be drafted for schools to invite parents to be involved in the IPRC process and to provide them with the option of attending these meetings. Sue Shaw suggested that parent input into the draft letter would be helpful. Tracey Lindsay responded that the draft letter will come to SEAC for review.

Don Richardson remarked that it is important to include the Parent Guide to Special Education with the letter. Parents should be encouraged to review the IEP. Carrie Proudfoot felt that the time limit needs to be adjusted. Fifteen minutes may not suffice for the IEP meeting. Tracey Lindsay responded that this time may be rescheduled or more time allocated for the meeting. This information will be included in the letter for parents to understand that they have this opportunity.

### **Annual Calendar of SEAC Business 2016-2017**

Tracey Lindsay reviewed the draft calendar for the following school year with the committee and requested feedback. This annual calendar is the template used for setting the SEAC meeting agendas. Tracey Lindsay referred to the events of the past year and included several of these items. Suggestions to be included in this calendar:

- Gifted Review in September
- David Leposky to present in October
- Special Needs Audit in the province
- BIPSA – Board can invite Province to do audit – more information on the Ministry of Education website
- Additional presentations – Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Guelph Services for the Disabled for overview of facilities management
- Speciality programs - Section 23 process
- How to engage new members for SEAC
- Climate survey and matrix data for input into Special Education Plan

Carrie Proudfoot requested that review of the calendar become an action item and be reviewed every three months. Tracey Lindsay responded that this will be a standing item on the agenda monthly.

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### Special Education Plan and Report

Cheryl Van Ooteghem expressed her pleasure at presenting the Special Education Plan and Report. All documents have been uploaded to the SEAC meeting folder on UGCloud. She congratulated everyone on the work that was accomplished throughout the year. Changes to these documents will be accepted until July 15, 2016 before they are finalized and sent to the Ministry.

The committee discussed the revisions and made suggestions they felt should be included in the document.

The Mental Health Supports for Schools in Year Five of the Five Year Cycle of Support document was distributed to the committee for their information. There are four components to this document: Tools for Life; Collaborative Proactive Solutions; Zones of Regulation; and Tribes.

Tools for Life - This is a relationship-building program with strategies that provide resources that are available for use in schools, child care centres, homes and community agencies with 3-13 year olds. Tools for Life resources reflect the belief that healthy relationships, based on mutual respect, are key components of well-being. This is a live document and will have constant changes.

Collaborative Proactive Solutions – This training follows the model of Dr. Ross Greene in which the central premise is “Kids Do Well If They Can!” this training helps classroom teachers and administrators learn how to identify what the student’s ‘lagging skills’ are that are underlying the ‘unsolved problem’.

Zones of Regulation – This is a program that encourages students to learn about their own regulation system and how they can move through the 4 zones safely (Blue Zone: sad, sick, bored, tired; Green Zone: happy, focused; Yellow Zone: frustrated, worried, wiggly, excited, some loss of control; Red Zone: mad, terrified, elated, hitting, yelling, out of control).

Tribes – The clear purpose of the Tribes process is to assure the healthy development of every child so that each one has the knowledge, skills and resiliency to be successful in a rapidly changing world.

The revised SEAC brochure was also shared with the committee. Changes to the links to reflect the correct websites will be done.

The Parent Guide to Special Education had minimal changes. The only section that was added was dispute resolution.

SEAC is requesting that all policy changes be brought to them for input. Linda Busuttil, Carrie Proudfoot and Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy will draft a letter to the Board of Trustees to restate that SEAC is to be consulted on all Policies in their statutory advisory role to the

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Board. Sue Shaw commented that the Special Education Audit specifies that timely communication to SEAC is crucial.

Don Richardson requested that the goals in the BIPSA that directly relate to special education goals be included in the Plan so that SEAC can monitor the Board's progress as it relates to special education.

Don Richardson suggested that one of the goals for next year be to provide an in-service on results based accountability or similar tools that can be used to improve the Special Education Plan. Linda Busuttill will meet with Don Richardson to discuss this option.

### **Review Special Education Parent Resources**

Cheryl Van Ooteghem was instrumental in facilitating reviews of the IEP Parent Guide and the Special Education Parent Guide. Staff involved with the reviews included Trudy Counter and the Special Education Consultants.

### **Open Forum**

**Laurie Whyte**, FASworld –Nancy Hall will be providing training on October 15, 16 and 17, 2016 for parents and professionals. Allen Mountford, a Special Education teacher with the Durham District School Board is implementing a program based on Nancy Hall's training.

**Sharon Dills**, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County – LDAWC free family conference will be held on October 22, 2016. More details will be available on website.

**Carole Craig**, Integrated Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) (IAI) – The Kingston IAI organized parent workshops to gather parent feedback to inform their local Special Education review. The new CEO of IAI (Erin Sheldon) participated in these very successful workshops and she is willing to come and facilitate parent workshops in this area related to SEAC.

### **Updates from the Superintendent of Program**

- Special Olympics day was a great success. This is a highlight of the year for those in attendance.
- Special Olympics Committee was nominated by the Special Education department for the Every Day Hero award for their hard work in making this event so successful.
- Dr. Fred Hoffman, a Kiwanis Club volunteer was also nominated by the Special Education department for his generosity and dedication to organizing the annual Kiwanis Christmas luncheon.
- Both of the nominees were recognized at a reception honouring all the winners that was held on June 1, 2016.

### **SEISSC Monthly Update**

No updates.

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## Trustee Report

### Linda Busuttil –

If you have budget questions or delegation requests for Board, these are to be directed to Janice Wright, Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy or Linda Busuttil.

There has been a decision regarding elementary French Immersion JK entry. There will be a central application date with a random selection application process that will determine school placement. Students will be accepted into our program, but not a particular school; this will allow better use of empty spaces. Students who are not placed in their home school will receive an offer of re-direction to attend another program in another school with transportation.

This time of year is very busy with all the activities at the schools.

### Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy –

Graduations and awards nights have kept everyone busy in recognizing our students and the people who support them.

Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy feels this budget has many positive packages for our students. The changes to the Speech and Language staff and the addition of the Education Assistants will positively affect all things SEAC and everything under this umbrella.

## Meeting Summary, Recommendation(s), Motions(s) and Action(s)

### Action Items:

- Draft IPRC Parent form letter to come to September SEAC for review will include a link
- Annual Calendar of SEAC Business will be reviewed monthly and will be a standing item on the agenda
- Policy Consultation – Carrie Proudfoot, Linda Busuttil and Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy to draft letter to Board of Trustees regarding policy coming to SEAC as SEAC as an advisory committee. Part of the letter will inquire about how communication should flow and include that timely communication to SEAC is crucial
- Gifted Review – Staff will put together the plan and letter for September roll out. Tracey Lindsay will share with Jason Offer and other parent for input. In September, we will talk about a committee to review the Elementary Process.
- Special Education Plan – items in the BIPSA that are directly related to Special Education should go to in the Special Education Plan; goals in the Special Education Plan will come monthly to SEAC so together we can look at how they can be measurable
- Results Based Accountability – Don Richardson and Linda Busuttil to meet and articulate what data we are gathering
- Goals of Special Education Plan to be discussed during the monthly reviews of each section



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**Adjournment**

Don Richardson motioned for adjournment of meeting at 10:25 p.m. Sharon Dills seconded the motion.