

Upper Grand District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, May 11, 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, Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada, Carole Craig, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario)(by teleconference), 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)

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, Christine Kay, Principal, Wendy McIntosh-Clodd, Secondary Vice-Principal, Special Education Consultants, Ben McCabe, Kathy Green, Kim Cozzolino, John Potocska, OSSTF

Trustees Present: Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Linda Busutil

Regrets: Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Special Education Consultants Jacqueline Weresch, Debbie Snow

Absent: Audra Cook, Secondary Vice-Principal, Dr. Mary Susan Crawford, Chief Psychologist, Special Education Consultants, Jackie Speers, Jacqueline Foster, Mark Howe, Kyla Lightfoot

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

Approval of Agenda May 11, 2016

Laurie Whyte moved that the agenda of May 11, 2016 meeting be approved. Sharon Dills requested that the agenda reflect the LDAWC presentation will be done by Cheri Herdman, Program Coordinator LDAWC. Sharon Dills seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of April 13, 2016

Laurie White moved that the minutes of April 13, 2016 be approved. Sharon Dills seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

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Action Items

Tracey Lindsay provided updates to the following action items:

- Climate Survey- Tracey Lindsay brought feedback regarding outreach of the survey. Information was posted on the Board and school websites, given to principals to insert in newsletters and also broadcast through the Aizan system to all UGDSB parents/guardians and staff. Participation in the survey was very low, in parent responses and low in student responses. Bonnie Talbot, Superintendent of Education will be working with University of Guelph throughout the summer to discern the data and figure out what data can be used for the Bully Prevention Plan. Therefore the draft Bully Plan will come to SEAC in September. Several SEAC members felt the survey did not provide any new information and was lacking in the types of questions that were asked. Linda Busuttil will meet with Bonnie Talbot to talk about the survey and the need to be included with other stakeholders on the Draft Bully Plan.
- Don Richardson stated that the Board is still not in compliance with the Ministry of Education directive. The Ministry requires that the Board consult with SEAC to prepare the Bully Plan. Tracey Lindsay responded that this should be shared with SEISSC through the SEAC representatives on SEISSC. SEAC has representation on this committee and it is to be addressed there. This led Don Richardson to talk about results based accountability. He feels that our goals are not measurable. Tracey Lindsay confirmed that she is not disagreeing with the concept of results based accountability, but as discussed in past meetings, Special Education and the Student Support and Program Services department is a wrap-around service and it is hard to measure the success of one initiative or action. To that end, Tracey Lindsay has volunteered her department to be part of an audit process to determine how we might be able to move to having goals we can measure and the ability to get data to that end. The audit has just been completed but not yet gone to Board. It is an internal audit but Tracey Lindsay will bring a report for SEAC in June.
- Stakeholders for Policy Consultation – Carrie Proudfoot and Linda Busuttil will draft letter for June SEAC meeting
- New Action Item - Template for MASCE was sent out to SEAC members on May 5, 2016 and is to be completed by organization representatives by May 26, 2016. Send to Krystyna Gazo to forward to Linda Busuttil.
- Feedback on Policies – Discussion at meeting

Correspondence

No correspondence received.

SEAC Conference Report/Pro Grant Update

The SEAC Event held on April 30, 2016 at Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute had approximately 55 attendees. Sarah McVanel of Greatness Magnified was the keynote speaker. Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Trustee, provided a breakout session for parents. Jason Offer thanked Linda Busuttil, Tracey Lindsay, Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Carrie Proudfoot and Sue Shaw for all their work in organizing and making this event a possibility.

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Sue Shaw commented that the most visible group asking for information was elementary and parents were highly engaged.

Jason Offer, Carrie Proudfoot, Sue Shaw and Carole Craig attended the Toronto Regional Conference on April 16, 2016. Funding for this event was provided by the Ministry and there were approximately 1,000 parents from five school boards. Dr. Ian Manion, Child and Youth Mental Health expert and one of the keynote speakers spoke of anxiety issues. Dr. Marie Wilson, Commissioner, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the second keynote speaker talked about aboriginal issues.

Carrie Proudfoot requested that SEAC invite David Lepofsky, Chair of the TDSB SEAC and ADOA Advocate, to come to a future SEAC meeting to speak about accessibility. October 2016 was tentatively selected for his presentation.

LDAWC Presentation

Cheri Herdman, the new Program Coordinator of LDAWC introduced herself and provided a power point presentation. She explained the LDAO definition of a learning disability. "Learning Disabilities" refers to a variety of disorders that affect the acquisition, retention, understanding, organization or use of verbal and/or non-verbal information. These disorders result from impairments in one or more psychological processes related to learning, in combination with otherwise average abilities essential for thinking and reasoning. Learning Disabilities are specific not global impairments and as such are distinct from intellectual disabilities.

Diagnosis of a learning disability is done in several ways: a registered psychologist will perform an assessment; the student may be identified by the school and the Board will arrange for and pay for the assessment; or the parents purchase a private assessment.

Cheri Herdman presented several pictures that had two images within one picture. Anyone with a learning disability has difficulty in deciphering the images. Learning disabilities affect the following:

- Oral Language (listening, speaking, understanding)
- Reading (decoding, comprehension)
- Written Language (spelling, written expression)
- Mathematics (computation, problem solving)
- Organizational skills (punctuality, meeting deadlines)
- Social Skills (behaviour inappropriate for occasion)

The definition of the term Learning Disability in the revised Ministry of Education Policy on Learning Disabilities (PPM 8) is consistent with key concepts of the LDAO definition of Learning Disabilities. These concepts are now part of the ministry definition to be used for identification of students with learning disabilities through the IPRC process. In addition, the revised PPM 8 provides direction on recognition and identification of Learning Disabilities (including early and ongoing screening, and assessments) and on program planning for students with learning disabilities.

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Power Point presentation is available on UGCloud in SEAC folder for May 2016 meeting.

As the LDAWC Program Coordinator, Cheri Herdman plans to begin a peer support group in Guelph in the fall. Monthly workshops are being facilitated in the community. Newsletters are distributed monthly and will list the different workshops that are being presented. The website is being updated to make it more user-friendly. The annual family conference will be held on October 22, 2016. Last year there were 38 participants for the first conference that was held at a local school. The conference promotes awareness and value throughout the community through discussions/meetings. Cheri Herdman is also reaching out to student councils to be put on their agendas for September. The Annual General Meeting is held in December.

A short online focus group survey is available to those on the LDAWC mailing list and through their Facebook page. On completion of the survey, individuals are entered in a draw to win a \$50 Chapters gift card. An advocacy service is being planned for September.

Linda Busuttill asked Cheri Herdman if SEAC could utilize LDAWC distribution lists to promote SEAC's vision or gather parent feedback as their outreach would include families that are not in the schools.

Tracey Lindsay asked if the website is the best avenue for parents to access the information or if there are printed materials. Cheri Herdman responded that they have been working with the Research Shop through the University of Guelph. They are compiling the research and the information will be posted on their website for download. Printed material would be available through Cheri Herdman. Tracey Lindsay requested materials for assessments and debrief meetings and asked Cheri Herdman to present to her department.

Any questions may be directed to Cheri Herdman at info@ldawc.ca.

Open Forum

Laurie Whyte, FASworld – training was provided with Nancy Hall last week. There were 15 people from the Board and a total of 80 that attended. Feedback was extremely positive. Foster parents, caregivers, adoptive parents, corrections and mental services personnel were part of the training group. More training for staff is a goal for next year.

Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC – ABC Ontario Annual Conference was held on May 7, 2016 in Toronto. There were many informative education pieces and opportunities to network with counterparts in the province.

Jason Offer asked Tracey Lindsay for an update regarding the Gifted program. Tracey Lindsay responded that all parents were contacted in the Dufferin area and there will be two classes at Spencer Avenue Public School for the next school year. The composition of these classes will depend on the numbers in June. Classes will be grade splits with the

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possibility of reassessment in September. Two classes will be kept regardless of the numbers for next year.

A Gifted review is scheduled to begin in September 2016. A new version of the CCAT will be purchased and teachers will be trained to implement it. A letter will be sent to parents from the Chief Psychologist explaining the scores and the options available to the student prior to testing.

Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County – Workshop on May 25, 2016, “Transitioning from Elementary to Secondary Schools”. More information can be found on the [website](#). The previous workshop “Building Positive Relationships between Home and School” was a general presentation on how to build those relationships. Discussion on what that relationship looks like and what constituted a change in thinking around the relationships between home and school; some of the benefits of creating collaboration and partnership between home and schools; barriers and what families and schools can do to facilitate the relationships.

Don Richardson, Integrated Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) (IAI) – The Annual Conference and General Meeting will be held on June 4, 2016 in Kingston. “Natural Support Strategies –Strategies to build natural and peer supports in school and with the community” is the topic for the conference. Keynote speakers Norman Kunc & Emma Van der Klift will explore how to build natural support strategies to foster deeper inclusion and participation in school and the community. Poster and additional information circulated and posted on UGCloud folder.

Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County – Summer funding applications are available on the website.

Updates from the Superintendent of Program

- Special Olympics is scheduled for next Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at St. James fields
- Learning Hubs – School teams come together and put on workshops for all administrators and teachers. Special education is integrated and not isolated anymore. Feedback has been very positive. Last HUB will be held next week.
- Ministry has unveiled a new math strategy. Schools will receive support in this way: FEW, SOME, ALL. UGDSB’s math plan will include special education and particularly students with LD. Board Improvement Plan has always included special education and will come to SEAC in June
- ASD changes – Schools will continue to support ABA. Information about changes to IBI are on Ministry of Education website.

SEISSC Monthly Update

No updates. Meeting has been moved to Fall 2016. SEAC will look at selecting a new representative to sit on SEISSC in September 2016.

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Trustee Report

Linda Busuttil –

Education week featured many activities in the schools. Linda Busuttil thanked all the staff for organizing and planning these activities.

The Identified Boards Report was presented at the Business Operations meeting. This Report shows under-utilization of schools within the Board; where are the low enrolments and high enrolments.

The final budget for 2016-2017 will be presented at the Board meeting in June. Janice Wright, Superintendent of Finance will attend June SEAC meeting for budget update.

French Immersion recommendations will come to Board for consideration and vote. Key is cap to French Immersion in Junior Kindergarten entry.
There is declining enrolment in regular track schools. What do we do?

Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy –

Business Operations meeting was informative and interesting. There were approximately 50 people in the gallery and 8 delegations. Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy sees this as a step forward that people are talking and looking at solutions that will serve the majority.

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

Action Items:

- Climate Survey – Linda Busuttil to take feedback to Superintendents
- Stakeholders – draft letter to come to June meeting
- Feedback on policies – will be forwarded to Planning Department
- Special Education Audit – Tracey Lindsay will bring information to SEAC after it goes to Board
- Tracey Lindsay will bring a draft of the Gifted Review Plan
- AODA speaker – Carrie Proudfoot to connect with David Leposky and Tracey Lindsay to research funds for presenter
- Linda Busuttil and Carrie Proudfoot to contact Michelle Watterson for nomination to Member-at-Large
- New representative on SEISSC from SEAC – how to make meetings accessible
- Jason Offer – remind presenters for presentation material prior to meeting
- SEAC training for committee members was discussed and will be considered for future meetings.

Questions for June Topic

- None

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Special Education Plan Topic for June

- Draft Report and Plan - all sections that have been reviewed will be into the Plan and Report. Some outstanding goals will transfer to the new Action Items Chart for the next year.
- Jason Offer requested that SEAC review the Plan online
- Calendar - review and revise the calendar for next year
- What is SEAC's role – to make recommendations to the Board and participate in the Special Education Report and budget

Adjournment

Laurie Whyte motioned for adjournment of meeting at 9:10 p.m. Don Richardson seconded the motion.