

UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

2011 01 12

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, January 12, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph. The following were present:

Association Members

Kim Brenner, Parents for Children's Mental Health-Wellington County
Beth Haworth, Community Member at Large
Patricia Hlushko, Autism Ontario-Wellington County (Alternate)
Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
Katie Vanderyt, VIEWS for Children Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision
Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders)

Staff

Sue Adams, Special Education Consultant
Heather Boswell, Superintendent of Program
Stephen Gayfer, Secondary Vice-Principal
Chris Kay, Elementary Principal
Sandra Szpular, Collaborative Projects Lead/Special Education Coordinator
Bonnie Talbot, Principal of Program

Trustees

Marty Fairbairn

Regrets

Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children of Ontario (ABC)
Jennifer Waterston, Trustee
Heather Clemmer, Easter Seals Ontario
Bonnie Burgess, Coordinator of Speech - Language Services
Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County

Absent

Pauline Busby, Community Living Guelph-Wellington

Laurie Whyte called the meeting to order. Kim Brenner opened the meeting by reading a poem written by a member of Parents for Children's Mental Health about the member's grandson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Stacey Stevens
That the agenda of the January 12, 2011 meeting be approved.
The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Stacey Stevens
That the minutes of the meeting held on December 8, 2010 be approved.
The motion carried.

GROWING SUCCESS – DRAFT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION POLICY FOR FEEDBACK

Action

Bonnie Talbot, Principal of Program presented the *Draft Assessment and Evaluation Policy* that was distributed with the agenda. The policy is implemented in accordance with the Ministry document *Growing Success, Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*, First Edition, Covering Grades 1 to 12, 2010, released last spring and the *Ontario Curriculum*, Grades 1-12.

As a result of this document, there have been changes to the Report Card timelines and templates. A fall Progress Report and parent/teacher interviews replaced the fall Report Card for elementary students.

The *Assessment and Evaluation Policy* was presented in draft format this evening. The intention was to allow members an opportunity to provide feedback while looking at it as parents of students with special education needs. The Administrative Detail and Definitions were reviewed. Attention was drawn to the definitions of Assessment, Assessment As Learning, Assessment For Learning and Assessment Of Learning, as well as Teacher Professional Judgement. The Guiding Principles from *Growing Success* were also reviewed. Items 4d and 4e in the System Goals section were highlighted as they are specific to students with special education needs.

As a means of consistency across the province, the Ministry has asked boards to look at 3 areas; Academic Integrity – Prevention, Detection and Consequences for cheating and plagiarism, Late and Missed Assignments and Lower Mark Limit for inclusion in the policy.

Laurie Whyte posed a question about the possible differences in teacher's professional judgement. Bonnie Talbot replied that teachers will need to reference the expectations outlined in the curriculum documents while using their judgement in assessing and evaluating. Further discussion took place regarding teacher professional judgement.

Heather Boswell referred to "Fairness is not Sameness" taken from *Learning for All*. Stephen Gayfer noted that we want our students to be successful. If they are unsuccessful, we would then look at what intervention strategies have been used.

Following an inquiry from Trustee Fairbairn about inservices provided on the *Growing Success* document, Bonnie Talbot noted that she provided a workshop for both elementary and secondary Principals in June. Principals then worked with their staff on the September 2nd Professional Development day which was dedicated to this.

The draft policy has been reviewed by the Leadership Team and will be reviewed by other stakeholders. Revisions will be made as a result of input from these groups.

Please bring any additional feedback to the next SEAC meeting.

THE SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

Sandra Szpular, Coordinator of Special Education reviewed the background of the Special Education Report previously entitled the Special Education Plan explaining that we are moving toward making this report accessible for parents and the public by providing information about what special education supports and services are offered at the Upper Grand DSB.

Each month various sections are reviewed and feedback is gathered from members regarding suggested revisions. The revisions that have been made to date were reviewed and a revised copy of the Special Education Report will be posted on the Upper Grand DSB website.

The Table of Contents page containing the timing for the remaining sections of the report to be reviewed was distributed. The plan is to continue reviewing various sections, gather feedback from SEAC members and make the appropriate revisions.

At the February meeting, the Board's General Model for Special Education, Roles and Responsibilities, Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies and Educational and Other Assessments sections will be reviewed.

This evening the *Philosophy of Special Education: Guiding Principles and Our Shared Beliefs* (being used in Ministry documents) statements were distributed and reviewed in small groups. Following discussion of both, it was determined that re-wording of the introduction would be appropriate. We will continue using the Guiding Principles contained in the report.

The suggested changes will be made and reviewed at the February meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Stacey Stevens was happy to report that the Upper Grand DSB is going to be participating in the Auditory-Verbal Therapy (AVT) Mentorship Program in the fall. AVT is a methodology to teach hearing impaired children to learn to listen and develop speech and auditory skills.

Kim Brenner advised that Parents for Children's Mental Health (PCMH) is now on Facebook. PCMH is also participating in a magazine fundraiser.

Patricia Hlushko noted that a Ladies Roller Derby Club has recently created a calendar. A portion of the proceeds are being donated to Autism Ontario – Wellington Chapter.

Katie Vanderyt mentioned that VIEWS is currently working with the province around short term placements for students who are not attending W. Ross Macdonald School

for the blind in Brantford. Camps are also being offered in the summer. More information will follow.

Laurie Whyte inquired about the guidelines/class size limit for students in the Early Learning Program (ELP) and regular stream Kindergarten programs. Heather Boswell contacted Superintendent Benallick through email for clarification. Also noted was the Fetal Alcohol Action Group is hosting a training session on February 24th. Strategies for working with children and supporting caregivers will be the focus of this session. There will also be a full day workshop held in the spring.

UPDATES FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PROGRAM

Heather Boswell thanked Stacey Stevens for mentioning our involvement in the AVT Mentorship program. The decision to move forward with this program followed discussion amongst our staff and consultation with other boards who have taken part in the program.

Sandra Szpular spoke about the Dr. Ross Greene presentation that took place on January 6, 2011. Dr. Ross Greene is the author of *Lost At School* and *The Explosive Child*. This event was sponsored by the Student Support Leadership Initiative of Wellington and Dufferin. Attending from our Board were the Superintendents of Education, Superintendent of Program, a Principal or Vice-Principal and Teacher from each school, Child & Youth Counsellors, Staff from Psychological Services, Special Education, Speech-Language Services, and Counselling and Attendance. Subsequently, a smaller group attended a follow-up session on January 7th looking deeper into the implementation of the strategies presented.

A copy of the *Lost At School* book was purchased for all elementary schools in June of last year. Secondary schools received two copies of this book prior to the session.

Dr. Mary Susan Crawford is meeting with the Child & Youth Counsellors on January 31st. As a follow-up to the Ross Greene session, they will be reviewing samples of work completed using some of the strategies presented. She will be sharing further information at the February SEAC Meeting.

Heather attended the Gifted Class Parent Information Meeting held at Waverley Dr., P.S. on January 6, 2011, for all parents of students who met the criteria for the gifted program. Carla Anderson, Special Education Consultant organized the evening along with the principals from F.A. Hamilton P.S. and Waverley Dr., P.S. Jason Offer presented on behalf of SEAC.

The Special Education Class Placement Committee met on January 11th to review the placement requests for September 2011. There will be a second placement meeting on January 14, 2011.

On January 13th, staff will be attending the *Learning For All* Regional Session. At this

meeting, boards will be sharing their work as it relates to *Learning For All*.

Heather will be attending the Regional Special Education Council (RSEC) meeting on January 21, 2011 with Special Education Superintendents from other boards and the Ministry.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Marty Fairbairn mentioned the recent Organizational and Business Operations Committee meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Kim Brenner that the meeting be adjourned at 9:10 p.m.
The motion carried.