

Upper Grand District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes
Wednesday, April 8, 2015

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, April 8, 2015 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, Sue Shaw, Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC, Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada, Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario), Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County, Carole Craig, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario)

Present from Staff were: Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program, Cheryl Van Ooteghem, Principal of Program, Jeni Vaughan, Vice-Principal, Christine Kay, Vice-Principal, Special Education Consultants; Jackie Speers, Kathy Green, Naomi Theodor, Ben McCabe

Trustees Present: Linda Busuttil

Present from Public: John Potoska

Regrets: Bruce Schieck, Trustee, Trudy Counter, Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech Services,

Absent: Special Education Consultants: Lesley Anne Jordan, Mark Howe, Carla Anderson, Dr. Mary Susan Crawford, Chief Psychologist

Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Agenda April 8, 2015

Sharon Dills moved that the agenda of April 8, 2015 meeting be approved. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of March 11, 2015

Laurie Whyte moved that the minutes of the meeting held on March 11, 2015 be approved as printed. Linda Busuttil seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

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Action Items

Tracey Lindsay reviewed the Action Items chart and provided updates from the March 11, 2015 meeting. Changes from the previous meeting are indicated by italics on the chart.

- Guidelines for Integrated Transition Plans were shared at the November 2014 SEAC meeting by Sandra Ellis, Community Connections and Collaborative Projects Lead. An update will be provided in the fall of 2015
- Special Education Plan was dropped into UGCloud for members to review and provide feedback. No feedback was received to date and this will be left open for members to add suggestions/revisions until April 24, 2015.
- Kelly Meisner will present "Strategies for Inclusion" at the June 2015 SEAC meeting.
- Special Education Survey Committee will provide updates at the May 2015 SEAC meeting.
- Questions for Safe Schools and Equity, School Bullying Plans will be forwarded to Bonnie Talbot, Superintendent of Education and Colinda Clyne, Equity & FNMI Curriculum Leader for their presentation at the May SEAC meeting.
- Sharon Dills thanked the committee for their support and explained that the Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington has hired a consultant to assist with their funding request. Sharon Dills will continue to represent Learning Disabilities regardless of the outcome. SEAC will not be drafting a letter at the time and action item is closed on chart.

Correspondence

No correspondence received. Carole Craig was appointed as an alternate for Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) at the March 31, 2015 Board meeting.

eLearning

Tracey Lindsay welcomed and introduced Sean Hamilton, eLearning Contact and Steve Wynen, Vice-Principal Continuing Education and eLearning. Tracey Lindsay explained that the presenters would address the questions that were prepared at our March meeting to the best of their ability.

Sean Hamilton explained that eLearning is used to prepare students for post-secondary studies and work place training. There is a growing trend for online learning. The online corporate market is expected to grow by 13% per year up to 2017. Today, 77% of USA companies offer online corporate training to improve the professional development of their employees

There are many reasons for eLearning; courses may not be available at the school; course not available in the semester; specialized program; timetable conflict; to support the learner's needs. The Ministry of Education considers eLearning a part of the overall Student Success strategy.

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UGDSB eLearning had 35 courses this year, for our students and for students from the partner Boards in the Consortium. The UGDSB joined the OeLC in 2008-09, offering 5 courses that first year. Now there are 21 Ontario School Boards in the OeLC, with two new Boards just recently joining. This year, through this partnership, our students had access to 1,028 course offerings via online learning.

Full presentation is available on www.ugcloud.ca SEAC April 2015 meeting information folder.

Sue Shaw commented that the presentation was well prepared. She asked what the number of students would be required for a course to be offered. If five students requested the course, would it be available to them. Equity and access is an important issue. She questioned what support is available to Special Education students with IEPs. Would these students be last on the list when requesting courses? Steve Wynen responded that yes, we do support students with IEPs and that these students were not excluded or last on the list. Sign up is first come, first serve. We could supplement or pull in students from the consortium to have courses run with a reasonable number of students. Course availability for any student is based on registration. If a student is registering late, the probability could be low that they will have access to the course.

Jason Offer asked for clarification of a course and a section. Steve Wynen responded that a course is a group of students with a teacher. Based on the collective agreements, there are different cap sizes for different course levels. Sections are number of classes within the school year.

This year there are 26 semestered “sections” shared by all 11 Secondary Schools. There are 550 credit attempts by Upper Grand District School Board in UGDSB courses and 230 credit attempts by Out of Board students in UGDSB courses. Attempts are the number of students that are currently registered in online courses.

Carrie Proudfoot asked when do students decide to drop courses. Steve Wynen responded that this usually occurs at the beginning of the school year. Students realize that they no longer require the course for graduation or it is not relevant to their studies. Training was provided to focus on a pro-active approach to getting students started and engaged right at the start.

Linda Busutil asked if eLearning is accessible? Steve Wynen responded that Desire2Learn is continually making changes to keep the Learning Management System (LMS) among the best in terms of accessibility. The home page is screen readable, and there are lots of checks built in to force accessible standards.

Linda Busutil commented that we need to continue to build in-school supports. Students are working on their courses in guidance, libraries or at home and support is available. No funding is available to provide teacher assistance and supervision in the school. Online assistance is also offered for students.

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Carole Craig asked if a student was able to take eLearning courses at school if there were no device or internet available at home? She also questioned if the number of students with IEPs that were leaving eLearning were tracked in comparison to academic students. Steve Wynen responded that students would have access to school computers for eLearning. Forms are completed by the counsellors when students withdraw from a course stating the reason. This could potentially indicate why any student with IEPs would withdraw and the data used for any indicators. Sharon Dills questioned whether there was any follow up with student and parent if the student was not successful. Steve Wynen explained that they have started facilitating credit recovery by providing the information and course material to the student's home school enabling them to work towards recovering the credit.

Don Richardson commented that some students with IEPs have difficulties with face to face contact and excel with eLearning. He questioned how eLearning is maximized? Sean Hamilton responded that some courses make use of Adobe Connect. Some teachers are new to eLearning and need to learn how to explore the different technologies for the students. Good learning is when students collaborate with each other.

Don Richardson commented that K-Net has been used in remote communities for approximately 15 years for students that do not have access to secondary schools in the Reserves to provide online learning.

Carrie Proudfoot questioned how credit recovery is being accessed. Steve Wynen responded that the information is sent to the home school. ELearning courses are provided to assist the student but the home school is responsible for credit recovery.

Jason Offer questioned how the trade between the consortium and the school board is negotiated. How is the number of sections determined? Steve Wynen responded that students drive staffing and sections. Many teachers are already doing blended learning and offering technology. Sue Shaw asked if the number of students be increased for eLearning. Exposure to this option could be made available in elementary schools so the skill set could be built before they attend high school. Sean Hamilton responded that Google Docs is being utilized earlier for students to have access. Teachers are becoming more proficient and the students are more technologically savvy. Steve Wynen added that some of the other Boards in the Consortium have mandated an eLearning course in secondary school.

Carrie Proudfoot thanked Steve Wynen and Sean Hamilton for their presentation.

Special Education Report and Plan

Feedback was requested for the Special Education Plan on Google Docs prior to the April meeting. Tracey Lindsay extended the date to April 24, 2015 to allow for more comments. Association and staff recommendations will be reviewed and discussed for inclusion to the Special Education Report which will be completed simultaneously with the Special Education Plan.

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The members of SEAC had a discussion about success indicators for the Special Education Plan. How do we know we are making a difference? Don Richardson asked if Smart Goals or indicators could be included in the chart to reflect the outcomes. Tracey Lindsay responded that we would build the plan with that recommendation in mind and SEAC members could put those recommendations and examples of Smart Goals on the Google Docs. Goals are taken from the Board Improvement Plan to develop the Special Education Plan. Linda Busutil suggested that we explore a workshop for Results Based Accountability (RBA) so that everyone is on the same page when we define an 'indicator'. Linda Busutil will make some contacts to see if a general workshop is possible. Please see the following link for more information on RBA which is used in the work of Halton's Children's Report Card <http://www.ourkidsnetwork.ca/Public/RBA-and-Halton-7>.

Association Meeting Dates and Pro Grant Event

Linda Busutil brought forth the suggestion that SEAC apply for the Pro Grant Event funding. Funding can be used to raise the SEAC profile annually. All associations would require a letter of agreement for this application. The deadline is May 19, 2015 with approximately \$30,000 available for a regional grant. Linda Busutil, Jason Offer, Sue Shaw, Carrie Proudfoot, Laurie Whyte and Sharon Dills have volunteered to sit on this committee to draft a proposal for the next SEAC meeting.

Associations will need to be more proactive in promoting their events. Mental Health and Environmental items are sent to each school by the Curriculum department which are included in the school newsletters.

Open Forum

Laurie Whyte (FASworld Canada) - Halton FASD Committee is running two-part educational series for Halton School Board staff. Series were provided last fall.

Waterloo FASD group – “Reach For It” program for boys titled “Canine Hero’s” is scheduled for April 25, 2015 and May 2, 2015.

New website and initiative in Canada is based on decades of work by Diane Malbin. Nancy Hall is the main contact in Niagara. This is the best place for neurobehavioural approach with FASD and best practice for understanding children.

Carrie Proudfoot (Autism Ontario-Wellington County) – World Autism Day was April 2, 2015. Developmental Task Force is on autism website www.autismontario.com

Don Richardson (Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario)) - “Stories of Possibility: Supporting Roles, Relationships, and Places of Belonging” workshop with Janet Klees on Saturday, May 23, 2015 in Barrie. Register online at www.integration-inclusion.com. Don Richardson recommended that SEAC research other Boards for their dispute resolution process as “Shared Solutions” is used as a guide. More information for parents to understand the route that is available when there is a dispute

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needs to be addressed. Some parents do not understand the IEP, the process or how to resolve a dispute. Tracey Lindsay responded that we could outline the process and include it in the IEP Parent Guide. She also requested that Don Richardson forward what he has found. A new Action Item will be added to the chart – Communication Plan in the IEP Parent Guide Regarding Dispute Resolution.

Stacey Stevens (VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children) – VOICE 23rd Annual Conference with keynote speaker, Marion Balla, who will address the Five Phase Mentoring Relationship Model, will be held May 2, 2015 at the University of Guelph. Waterloo-Wellington Chapter is hosting “Stories of Inspiration” at 6:30 p.m. on April 22, 2015.

Sharon Dills (Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County) – “Understanding Psychological Assessments” workshop on Monday, April 27, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. Math Success Strategies workshop with Peter Wright on Tuesday, May 26, 2015.

Updates from the Superintendent of Program

- April 8, 2015 is International Pink Day - Communities across the country and across the world unite in celebrating diversity and raising awareness to stop homophobia, transphobia, transmisogyny and all forms of bullying
- Collaborative Proactive Solutions by Ross Greene – Thursday, April 9, 2015 morning session is for Principals and Vice-Principals; afternoon session for all Psychologists and Social Workers, Child Youth Counsellors and School Teams that have had previous training. Evening session will be held for parents at John F. Ross CVI at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 10, 2015 is an all day session for School Teams, SERTs, Child Youth Counsellors (not trained) at Hanlon Convention Centre in Guelph. Approximately 400 in attendance.
- Space is available for any committee members who wish to attend the SEAC conference on May 2, 2015.
- Apple Training was provided for Program Services staff for two days at the Guelph Board office
- April 2, 2015 was National Autism Day
- UGDSB Regional Skills Canada Competition was held on April 2, 2015. This was the largest elementary competition in Ontario. Activities were held over three sites; College Heights Secondary School, Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute and the Centennial Arena
- Guelph Music Festival was a great event.
- Waterloo Science Festival was held April 7, 2015.
- ASIST Training

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Trustee Report

Linda Busuttil - The Board recently approved the Terms of Reference for the Board-wide French Review. This will look at core, extended and French Immersion programs. The Board approved a new JK-8 French Immersion (FI) Centre for East Guelph and Coupling Crescent. This school will relieve current overcrowding at both Edward Johnson PS and École King George PS.

Motion from SEAC March 11, 2015 meeting was presented to Board by Linda Busuttil. Board has agreed to write a letter of strong support for the issues and concerns raised in the Thames Valley District School Board's letter, namely the lack of awareness, service supports and assessment mechanisms for students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. And that this letter be directed to the Ministry and to the Ontario Public School Boards Association, since Ontario is the only province without a formal strategy.

Bruno Mancini, Director, Student Accessibility Services, University of Guelph, presented "LaunchPrep Program" at the Program Committee meeting. This summer transition program for youth with Mental Health struggles is offered at the University of Guelph. It is designed to help students build knowledge and skills that they can carry forward into the post-secondary experience. This exclusive program starts June 28, 2015 - July 3, 2015 and is available free to eligible students. Space is limited and application deadline is June 1, 2015.

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

- Bonnie Talbot, Superintendent of Education and Colinda Clyne, Equity & FNMI Lead will be presenting at May SEAC meeting. Questions prepared for presenters.
- Carlo Zen, Superintendent of Education and Secondary Curriculum & Student Success Lead will be presenting information regarding speciality programs. ie: Beyond Borders, CELP, Students with Special Needs at May SEAC meeting..
- Pro Grant Event – Jason Offer, Linda Busuttil, Sue Shaw, Carrie Proudfoot, Laurie Whyte and Sharon Dills will sit on committee.
- Don Richardson will provide links/resources for dispute resolution to Tracey Lindsay
- Don Richardson moved to accept letter addressed to Michael Barrett, President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) from Carrie Proudfoot, SEAC Chair supporting Thames Valley District School Board requesting that the OPSBA lobby the Provincial government and raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and the difficulties school boards are experiencing due to lack of service supports and assessment mechanisms. Seconded by Jason Offer.

Other

Adjournment

Don Richardson motioned for adjournment of meeting at 9:40 p.m. Seconded by Linda Busuttil.

The motion carried.