

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

Minutes  
Wednesday, March 11, 2015

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, March 11, 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,

**Present from Staff were:** Trudy Counter, Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech Services, Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program, Cheryl Van Ooteghem, Principal of Program, Dr. Mary Susan Crawford, Chief Psychologist , Jeni Vaughan, Vice-Principal, Special Education Consultants; Mark Howe, Jackie Speers, Carla Anderson,

**Trustees Present:** Linda Busuttil, Bruce Schieck

**Present from Public:** Carole Craig

**Regrets:** 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, Christine Kay, Principal

**Absent:** Special Education Consultants, Kathy Green, Naomi Theodor, Ben McCabe, Lesley Anne Jordan

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

**Approval of Agenda February 11, 2015**

Linda Busuttil moved that the agenda of February 11, 2015 meeting be approved. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

**Approval of Agenda March 11, 2015**

Bruce Schieck moved that the agenda of March 11, 2015 meeting be approved. Sue Shaw seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

**Approval of Minutes of January 14, 2015**

Jason Offer moved that the minutes of the meeting held on January 14, 2015 be approved as printed. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

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### Approval of Notes of February 11, 2015

Carrie Proudfoot requested that Carole Craig's name be added to the notes of February 11, 2015 as present from public. Linda Busuttil moved that the notes of the meeting held on February 11, 2015 be approved as printed. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

**The motion carried.**

### Action Items

Tracey Lindsay reviewed the Action Items chart and provided updates from the February 11, 2015 meeting.

- Discussion regarding visibility of SEAC on Upper Grand District School Board website was considered for inclusion with Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) to provide easier access to information. Linda Busuttil, Carrie Proudfoot, and Tracey Lindsay met with Mark Weidmark prior to SEAC meeting to gather ideas to improve the SEAC website.
- In our April SEAC meeting, we will prepare questions for the Safe Schools and Equity, School Bullying Plans presentation for the May SEAC meeting and forward to Bonnie Talbot, Superintendent of Education and Colinda Clyne, Equity & FNMI Curriculum Leader.
- SEAC Agenda planning will continue today. Topics from February meeting will be allocated colour priority and then listed for next meeting.
- Letter drafted by Chair addressed to the Honourable Liz Sandals, Minister of Education regarding Practicum Training in Special Education Part 1 ready for signature and mailing.
- Tracey Lindsay contacted the Ministry regarding other options for dispute resolution. The Ministry's response was that they recommended using the "Shared Solutions".
- IEP Parent Booklet has been finalized and been uploaded to UGCloud. This document will be reviewed annually and will be sent out to all parents with students with IEPs at the beginning of the school year. Jacqueline Foster, Special Education Coordinator is working on providing an accessible document on our website for parents.
- SEAC members have been asked to confer with their organizations and provide advice or recommendations on the review of the current Special Education Plan as we work on the Report and next year's plan. Please provide the input by the end of March to Tracey Lindsay. As we work towards developing the report and revising the plan, we will create a chart that will be posted on Google Docs for feedback. This is a yearly item on the Action Items Chart.
- Linda Busuttil to draft letter with Sharon Dills for Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County for funding.
- Linda Busuttil suggested that the Special Education Advisory Committee open a Twitter account. Carrie Proudfoot and Linda Busuttil will be responsible for posting information to Twitter.

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- Carrie Proudfoot to draft a letter to Michael Barrett, President, OPSBA, Ontario Public School Boards Association, adding our support to Thames Valley District School Board's letter requesting assistance from the Ontario Public School Boards Association, in their efforts to raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum and the lack of service supports and assessment mechanisms.

### **Correspondence**

Letters addressed to the Honourable Liz Sandals, Minister of Education regarding Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices were reviewed. Grand Erie District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee and Renfrew County District School Board Special Advisory Committee expressed their support for Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee's correspondence to the Ministry's hiring process for teachers.

At this time, Upper Grand District School Board SEAC will wait for responses to this recent correspondence to the Ministry.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) Courses Presentation**

Tracey Lindsay introduced Scot Bishop, Principal of Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute to the meeting. He thanked Sue Shaw for her recommendation that Ruth Tanner, Advanced Placement (AP) Course Coordinator present at SEAC.

Ruth Tanner distributed hand outs and provided a PowerPoint presentation. She explained that Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute has provided Advanced Placement exams for over fifteen years. Students take AP courses that lead to an AP exam in early May of the school year. This exam covers more than the normal curriculum requirements and is graded by the College Board in the United States. If the student is successful on this exam, they may gain advanced placement or transfer credits at university. AP exams that are offered at Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute are:

- Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
- Calculus and Statistics
- English Literature
- French Language
- Studio Art (+Art History)
- Microeconomics and Macroeconomics
- US History, European History
- Government Politics (US and World)

Reasons for Advanced Placement courses include:

- Helps with admission to International Universities and Colleges as well as Canadian higher education institutes
- Develops university-level skills
- Students can save money-get university level credits-may choose majors and electives more readily

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- Allows for Enrichment at Grade 11 & 12 level and allows for Advanced Study in a particular area of the curriculum (in contrast to the International Baccalaureate Program)

Advanced Placement courses are tied to individual teachers. Exams cost \$130 to write. If a student writes 5 Advanced Placement exams successfully, universities credit a year for the student and they start in their second year of study. See presentation material in the SEAC March meeting information folder on UGCloud.

Jason Offer questioned how these courses would be promoted. Ruth Tanner responded that they are in the process of visiting Grade 8 classrooms to provide information for Secondary School Advanced Placement course options. Sue Shaw asked if students must be registered at Centennial CVI to enrol in Advanced Placement courses. Ruth Tanner answered that Advanced Placement classes are offered to student at Centennial CVI and students must be enrolled for the full school year. Students who are out of area and who wish to transfer to Centennial CVI to attend Advanced Placement courses or for any other reasons must follow the procedures for Out of Area Request and transportation is not included. Advanced Placement courses are also offered at other Secondary Schools at the UGDSB.

Linda Busuttil responded that Advanced Placement is not a program but a course. She questioned how the Advanced Placement courses would affect the sections for Secondary teachers. Does a teacher lose her section and how will this be affected. Scot Bishop responded that staffing is driven by students and increasingly more students are interested in Advanced Placement or Enriched courses. Ruth Tanner explained that some courses will run full sections i.e.: Math, English and Chemistry while others will be in split classes. Linda Busuttil asked if teachers require training. Ruth Tanner responded that training is one day, requires one textbook and costs \$350.

Jason Offer questioned if there are any considerations to offer Advanced Placement as E-courses. Ruth Tanner responded that students in Advanced Placement courses are monitored by the teacher and therefore E-courses are not available.

Linda Busuttil commented that there is a Learning Choices Program Steering Committee that school teams/stakeholders present proposed programs for approval. Trustee and teachers have collaborated for a year to ensure a policy is in place for approving new programs.

### **Collaborative Proactive Solutions, formerly Collaborative Problem Solving - Ross Greene**

Dr. Mary Susan Crawford thanked the committee for inviting her to the meeting. She presented a video that encompassed the feedback of the participants of the Ross Greene training. Ross Greene's approach is listening and working together, to find a solution with the student, and teacher/principal/vice-principal. It involves the family and encourages

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social interaction. Students want to have their concerns heard and they may find a solution that adults may not have considered.

In the Upper Grand District School Board, core groups of teachers in approximately twelve schools (full day training) and a core group of twelve advanced trainers in Collaborative Proactive Solutions (Administrators, Social Work, Child Youth Counsellors, Psychology, Speech and Language, Special Education) were lead in training by Dr. Mary Susan Crawford. Follow up to schools that were trained was provided.

Sue Shaw questioned the amount of time this is required and how does this affect the teacher. Dr. Mary Susan Crawford responded that the teams support the teacher. Learning problems are resolved much quicker. Jacqueline Foster added that Special Education Resource Teachers are also being trained. The Ross Greene approach has been embraced by Upper Grand District School Board. Laurie Whyte questioned what happens if this approach is not suitable for every student. Identification of lagging skills is essential to determine what strategies can be provided. Understanding the exceptionalities and applying the lagging skills for that exceptionality determines the best outcome for the student. Dr. Mary Susan Crawford responded that there is no one method that works for everyone. Time is spent determining why a student is not learning and what lens will be applied. When she intervenes, her observations are that the solution is usually found in the classroom. Students are anxious about what is happening in the classroom and this should be addressed. Teachers have an enormous impact on the student and when there is engagement between student and teacher, it benefits the student.

In-services are scheduled for April 9 and 10, 2015.

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| April 9, 2015 a.m. | Principals and Vice-Principals at Lakeside Church   |
| April 9, 2015 p.m. | Trained schools and Social Workers, Child Youth Counsellor, and Psychologists at Lakeside   |
| April 9, 2015      | Parent presentation by Dr. Ross Greene at John F. Ross Collegiate Vocational Institute auditorium at 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Free and no registration required                    |
| April 10, 2015     | Introductory workshop for invited community members and school teams from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Hanlon Convention Centre. Register with Barb Whyton as space is limited. |

Hand outs of the presentation flyers were distributed to SEAC committee members. These will be uploaded to the SEAC folder on UGCloud, March 2015 meeting information folder.

### **SEAC Agenda Planning**

Topics for SEAC agendas were prioritized by colour coded dots. Red is yearly items, green is a one time, yellow is priority and blue is alternate years. Dots for all items will be inputted on a chart for the April meeting.

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### Open Forum

**Jason Offer** (Association for Bright Children-ABC) – Annual General Meeting held in Toronto at Humber College on February 20 – 21, 2015 was very successful. On Saturday,

parents from all across the province attended the parent sessions. Other Boards have the same challenges and the range of exceptionalities was informative.

**Carrie Proudfoot** (Autism Ontario-Wellington County) – Free webinar “Teens & Adults with Asperger Syndrome / High Functioning Autism: Building Positive Futures”  
Presenter: Dale Munro on [www.autismontario.com](http://www.autismontario.com)

### Updates from the Superintendent of Program

- Collaborative Proactive Solutions by Ross Greene will be held on April 9 & 10, 2015 (posters uploaded to SEAC Folder on UGCloud)
- Guelph Music Festival held on March 5 - 6, 2015 was a great experience for the students
- Dufferin Music Festival will be held on April 20 – 23, 2015 at Compass Church in Mono, ON

### Trustee Report

**Linda Busuttil** - Grants for Student Needs will be available at the end of March. Funding expected to be lower.

French Immersion Terms of Reference-Report at March meeting.

Business Operations Meeting- Transportation cost sharing options from Erin and Rockwood for the International Baccalaureate Program in Guelph was discussed. Ridership was low (15 students) and the motion did not pass.

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

- Action Item: Letter for Learning Disabilities Association funding to be drafted by Linda Busuttil and Sharon Dills
- Chair to draft letter to Michael Barrett, President, OPSBA, adding our support to Thames Valley District School Board’s letter dated November 25, 2014, addressed to Michael Barrett, President, OPSBA, from Ruth Tisdale, Chair of Special Education Advisory Committee requesting support from the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association and its member boards in their efforts to raise awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum and its impact on student achievement and well-being
- Chart for feedback on the Special Education Report from SEAC organizations to develop the next year Special Education Plan will be uploaded to Google Docs

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- April Agenda – questions were brainstormed for the presentation on e-learning (see SEAC April 2015 meeting information folder on UGCloud for the list of questions)

Trudy Counter, Coordinator of Communication, Language & Speech provided information regarding the community sessions available for the Special Needs Strategy. A session is being held on Thursday, March 12, 2015 at the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. Focus group is for parents, service and community providers. Registration is open until the session begins. Our Special Needs Strategy survey is accessible online on [www.ugdsb.on.ca](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca)

### **Other**

Linda Busuttil brought forth a suggestion that the Special Education Advisory Committee open a Twitter account. Parent Involvement Committee uses a twitter account. Further investigation of this option will be necessary. Linda Busuttil and Carrie Proudfoot would be responsible for the updates. Sue Shaw felt that a Twitter account would be beneficial for the Special Education Advisory Committee.

**Motion:** That the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee 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.

**Motion:** The members of SEAC formally request that a letter of strong support from the Board be considered by the Upper Grand District School Board Directors and that this be sent to the Ministry of Education and OPSBA.

Information for Special Education Advisory Committee Conference in May to be forwarded to Bruce Schieck, Jason Offer, Carrie Proudfoot, Tracey Lindsay and Carole Craig.

### **Adjournment**

Linda Busuttil motioned for adjournment of meeting at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by Jason Offer.

**The motion carried.**