

UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, February 13, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph.

The following Association Members were present: Kim Brenner, Parents for Children's Mental Health-Wellington County, Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County, Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC, Sue Shaw and Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Pauline Busby, Community Living Guelph-Wellington, Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario), Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children.

Present from Staff were: Lesley Anne Jordan, Special Education Consultant, Christine Kay, Principal, Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program, Vanessa Swance, Teacher, Sandra Szpular, Special Education Coordinator/Collaborative Projects Lead.

Trustee Present: Marty Fairbairn

Regrets: Sandra Roberts, Vice-Principal, Trudy Counter, Coordinator-Communication, Language and Speech Services, Doug Morrell, Superintendent of Program, Jennifer Waterston, Trustee.

Absent: Beth Haworth, Community Member-at-Large.

Marty Fairbairn called the meeting to order welcoming our guests.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pauline Busby moved that the Agenda of the February 13, 2013, Meeting be approved.

The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kim Brenner moved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on January 9, 2013 be approved.

The motion carried.

UPPER GRAND DSB – INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) REVIEW/AUDIT

Ms. Lesley Anne Jordan, Special Education Consultant and Ms. Sharon Dills, Learning Disabilities Association-Wellington County SEAC representative presented this evening through a PowerPoint presentation entitled "The 2011-2012 UGDSB IEP Review".

The presentation was to share the results of the internal review of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) the Ministry of Education required all school boards to complete in the spring

of 2012. The previous Ministry of Education Audit was completed during the 2006-07 school year.

Ms. Dills and Ms. Jordan spoke about the composition of the Internal Review Committee and the process used to review the IEPs submitted by Principals including the Scoring Rubric (provided by the Ministry) to score each IEP. It was noted that the IEPs did not contain any identifying student or school information. Each of the IEPs 12 key elements were identified by title and scored: emergent; developing; satisfactory or proficient. This differed from the 2006-07 Ministry Audit whereby 19 key elements were scored "yes" or "no" with an additional area for notes. Our goal is to have all IEPs score as proficient. Following the completion of the internal review, the results were submitted to the Ministry through a survey tool. A chart displaying the 2006-07 and the 2011-12 Review Findings was shared and included information about the accommodations, current level of achievement, and annual program goals. Due to timing, the Student Feedback Summary contained information gathered from two secondary school students who were interviewed by Ms. Jordan.

The next steps will include information sharing through presentations and workshops; educating the Early Childhood Educators and Educational Assistants about IEPs; sharing the rubric and IEP review tool with the Special Education Resource Teachers and Special Education Teachers; looking at resources available for staff; and an annual goal for professional development.

Sue Shaw commented that she believes student feedback is very important and would like to see this contain information from a broader cross-section. Don Richardson commented that it is important for students to understand what accommodations are available. Ms. Jordan responded that the IEP Engine does contain a comprehensive list of accommodations that can be used. Tracey Lindsay added that it is important to involve students in choosing what accommodations may work best for them especially in the intermediate level, as this would be included in transition planning.

Discussion took place regarding the usefulness of the IEP Review following comments about whether IEPs are useful for students and parents rather than being measured only by Ministry standards. It was felt that input from parents and students could provide richer feedback around IEPs. Tracey Lindsay suggested that we provide this type of feedback to the Ministry and explained that if an accommodation listed in the IEP is not working for a student, changes are made as the IEP is a living document. Jason Offer inquired whether we could incorporate a process to measure if there are improvements.

Don Richardson suggested we include feedback about the IEP Review/Audit as part of the framework.

UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD – TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Mr. Bill MacKenzie, Information Technology & Communications (ICT) Consultant provided the technology update this evening.

He began by speaking about UG Cloud which can be used by all staff and students in the

Upper Grand DSB as everyone has been provided with a separate login and password. "A Stroll through the Walled Garden" represents the security and privacy through the Board's active directory security. The technology initiatives are part of the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement which notes schools will incorporate technology at the point of instruction to engage students (e-Learning, UG2GO, Blended Learning). The goal is to support students anytime, anyplace, and using any device. UG2GO contains a wide variety of resources licensed for elementary and secondary student use. It has been visited two-million times since it was launched in 2010. A graph displayed data about the number of students accessing UG2GO during the school day as well as after school hours. Mr. MacKenzie then spoke about eLearning which is available for secondary students in our Board through the Ministry of Education. There are 35 courses offered just by the Upper Grand DSB and over 250 courses available to students through a consortium of boards and done completely on-line. The data gathered from a satisfaction survey completed by students was shared. Explanation was also provided about Blending Learning.

A "Google Apps for Education - Teaching and Learning in a Digital World" clip was shown whereby principals, teachers and students spoke about their experience using Google Apps. The data indicated a steady growth in the number of students and teachers using this during and after school hours.

Through funding received by the Ministry of Education and CODE, Mr. MacKenzie is collaborating with other boards on Teaching and Learning in a Digital World Projects – CODE 2013-14. He is also helping to organize the Google Apps for Education Ontario Summit in Kitchener on April 20-21, 2013 and encouraged members to attend.

Sue Shaw thanked Mr. MacKenzie for his presentation noting she is pleased to see Speak Q and Word Q included as some of the resources available. Mr. MacKenzie responded that this is part of the collaborative work with Special Education and the Information Technology department. Sharon Dills added that she hopes to see the greater range of eLearning courses over the semesters.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AMOUNT (SEA) UPDATE

Ms. Sandra Szpular, Special Education Coordinator/Collaborative Projects Lead presented "THE SEA story at the UGDSB".

Ms. Szpular began by highlighting the increase in the number of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) Claims for special equipment from 83 in 2005-06 to 358 in 2011-12. The DuraBook laptops introduced as the technology provided to Upper Grand students through SEA claims will no longer be ordered as we move to Dell laptops. Ms. Szpular spoke about looking at putting more iPads into schools in the fall. A LiveScribe Pen was displayed and explanation about its use was provided by Lesley Anne Jordan.

Ms. Szpular highlighted the two types of Special Equipment Amount (SEA) funding - the per pupil amount (for computer related equipment) and the claims based (non-computer equipment for sensory, hearing, vision, personal care). She also spoke about the technology training provided through LearnStyle for students, parents and teachers.

The pilot programs and the lessons learned were highlighted as was the Special Education refresh plans for 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. The focus for 2012-13 will be to look at Google and Technology for All (beneficial for everyone – necessary for some); equity, reviewing the Home Use of Assistive Technology Protocol and feedback from students on what tools they find most effective.

She concluded her presentation by sharing a DVD with students sharing the way they benefit from the use of technology.

OPEN FORUM

Sharon Dills reported the Learning Disabilities Association – Wellington County March Newsletter is expected shortly. The Programming Committee is working on events for the spring and fall.

Pauline Busby spoke about the upcoming Community Living Fashion Gala that will take place in April 2013.

Stacey Stevens reported that the VOICE local chapters will be meeting with school boards on March 4, 2013 as a follow-up to the fall meetings to discuss any gaps and how VOICE can support local students.

Jason Offer reported the Learning Choices Committee presented their preliminary report to the Board. The committee is looking for parental feedback about the International Baccalaureate program. Input can be provided through a survey on the Board website.

UPDATES FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PROGRAM

Ms. Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program provided the updates on behalf of Doug Morrell who was absent this evening.

The Gifted Class Parent Information Evening was held on January 10th at Waverley Drive P.S.

Doug Morrell has spoken with our Communications Officer regarding adding a footnote to letters and forms about accessibility.

The March SEAC Meeting agenda items were also noted.

TRUSTEE REPORT

There was nothing to report this evening.

MEETING SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION(S) AND MOTIONS

Don Richardson inquired about the review of action items and requested that we refer to previous minutes and receive updates on any action items.

OTHER

Action items to be reviewed at the March SEAC meeting are:

- Mental Health information be added to the Upper Grand DSB website
- Development of a SEAC web page
- Suggestion of including a response to the IEP Review/Audit as part of the Framework for the Special Education Plan
- Feedback received from the Ministry of Education about our Special Education Report

ADJOURNMENT

Don Richardson moved that the Meeting be adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

The motion carried.