

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, September 12, 2012, 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, Sue Shaw and Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County, Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, and Katie Vanderyt, VIEWS for Children Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision.

Present from Staff were:

Trudy Counter, Coordinator-Communication, Language and Speech Services, Carla Anderson, Barb Tomkins and Leta Vos - Special Education Consultants, Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program, Doug Morrell, Superintendent of Program, Sandra Roberts, Secondary Vice-Principal, Sandra Szpular, Collaborative Projects Lead/Special Education Coordinator.

Trustee Present:

Jennifer Waterston

The following members sent regrets:

Marty Fairbairn, Trustee, Beth Haworth, Community Member-at-Large, Pauline Busby, Community Living Guelph-Wellington, Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders) and Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario).

The following were absent:

Christine Kay, Elementary Principal and Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC.

Jennifer Waterston, Chair, called the meeting to order welcoming everyone, noting we did not have quorum at the meeting this evening.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

As there was not quorum at the meeting this evening, a motion approving the agenda of the September 12, 2012 meeting could not be put forward.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

As there was not quorum at the meeting this evening, a motion approving the minutes of the meeting held on June 13, 2012 could not be put forward.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT 2012

Sandra Szpular, Special Education Coordinator/Collaborative Projects Lead, presented the Special Education Report 2012. She began by referring to the Ministry of Education memo and checklist outlining the information to be included in the Special Education Report and posted on the Board website by September 1, 2012. The Special Education tab on the

Upper Grand DSB website was reviewed. This contains links to the Special Education Report, Parent Guide to Special Education, the Special Education Advisory Committee brochure and the Special Education on the Ontario Ministry of Education website.

The Special Education Report has been updated and additions were made in several areas including the Special Education Intervention Model where there was information added about Case Conferences, Transition Planning, Staff Development and Protocol for Partnerships. The Special Education Report contains detailed descriptions of procedures, supports and services available in our Board.

There are items that we will be updating this fall such as the Special Education Staff and information about pilot projects from Communication, Language and Speech Services. The Special Education Advisory Committee year in review information outlining a brief description of the highlights from the 2011-2012 will be added. Members were asked to forward their information to Donna Glodziak.

Sue Shaw noted that parents are not mentioned as being involved in the different types of meetings described in the Special Education Intervention Model.

As a means of becoming more familiar with the content of the Special Education Report, five questions were listed for discussion. Feedback was gathered from members about these questions. An example pertained to the question about whether a student would qualify for equipment through Special Education Amount (SEA) funding which led to a comment that it may not be easy to initially identify whether the child would qualify as exceptionalities can be so different (i.e. visual impairment as opposed to other exceptionalities). There was a suggestion made to include more examples of specialized equipment in this area (i.e. FM systems).

PARENT GUIDE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Sandra Szpular presented the Parent Guide to Special Education. The Ministry of Education checklist includes the Parent Guide to Special Education as one of the required components to be posted on the Board website. The updated Parent Guide to Special Education includes the revisions discussed at SEAC meetings last year which included the goal of making this document more parent friendly. We will be incorporating information around the appeal process once this is received from the Ministry of Education.

The Parent Guide is to be available to all schools and is to be provided to the parent/guardian when an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting is scheduled for a student.

Carrie Proudfoot inquired about whether this is posted on the school websites yet to which Sandra Szpular responded we will check into through our Webmaster.

OPEN FORUM

Stacey Stevens reported that VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children is sponsoring a fall event for families of children who are hearing impaired on September 23, 2012 from 1:30 – 5:00 p.m. at Snyder's Family Farm and Pumpkin Patch in Ayr, Ontario. The flyer will be

distributed to members through Donna Glodziak.

Katie Vanderyt reported that VIEWS for Children who are Blind or have Low Vision Camps will be starting in November. The fundraising event is scheduled for May 2013. More information will be provided.

Carrie Proudfoot reported that the ABA Conference is scheduled for September 15 and 16, 2012. The movie morning on September 15th will feature Finding Nemo. A family swim will be held on September 15th. The next Funmazing playgroup will be held on October 7th. On October 13th, movie morning will feature Hotel Transylvania. The family swim will be held on October 20th.

Kim Brenner reported that the Parents for Children's Mental Health Fall Summit is scheduled for September 21 and 22, 2012. Rob Black will be the featured guest at the September 21st Gala evening.

Sharon Dills reported that Learning Disabilities of Wellington County's Newsletter has been distributed and features an article about Eric Gillis a workshop presenter last year who competed in the 2012 Summer Olympics. Sean Cameron, a teacher with the Upper Grand DSB will be presenting a workshop about Learning Disabilities through the ages (following the path of a student with learning disabilities) on October 17th at ARC Industries. A Technology Summit will be held in November. October is Learning Disabilities month.

UPDATES FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PROGRAM

Doug Morrell spoke about our new Manager of Mental Health / Addictions Programs and Services, Dr. Lynn Woodford who has been hired through funding received to address the mental health needs of our students. She will be working with system leaders and community partners to help build capacity in schools.

The Lead Nurse for Wellington and Waterloo has also been hired through the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC). Sandra Szpular spoke about this position noting the nurse will be responsible for the nurses working under her direction. Three of these nurses will be hired to work in Wellington and Dufferin counties focusing on mental health facilities and supporting transitions for students with complex mental health needs.

Doug Morrell will be inviting the Manager of Mental Health and the Lead Nurse to present at SEAC and provide further information about their roles.

Sandra Szpular talked about the Changing Futures Prevention Summit being offered through the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy that will be held on October 18, 2012 at Lakeside Church.

The Special Education department is again hosting half-day workshops for our Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) and Secondary Heads of Special Education on September 20th. On September 21st, full day workshops will be provided for Special Education Resource Teachers and Secondary Heads of Special Education who are new to this role. Some of the topics being presented were mentioned.

The EQAO results were presented at the September Business Operations Committee meeting. We will invite the team to present the results at an upcoming SEAC meeting. Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program commented that they are pleased with the results in special education.

The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) of the Upper Grand DSB is seeking parent members. Information was distributed this evening.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Jennifer Waterston reported the first report for boundary consideration for the new South Guelph French Immersion JK-Grade 8 School was received at Board.

The motion that was approved at the June 13, 2012 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was presented at the June 26, 2012 Board meeting. The minutes of that meeting included the following:

“It was suggested that it would be helpful for the Trustees to have a staff report about the situation as well as a response from the Equity Committee so that they could make an informed decision. It was also noted that the Program Committee does not meet in September.”

The following motion was approved at the June 13, 2012 Board meeting.

“Trustee Fairbairn moved THAT the motion be deferred to the October Board meeting following receipt of a report at the October Program Committee meeting. “

Therefore, this motion will be presented at the October Board meeting following the staff report at the Program Committee meeting.

The correspondence from John Milloy, Minister, Ministry of Community and Social Services in response to the letter sent by our SEAC regarding eligibility and access to adult developmental services and support was read. In the letter, Mr. Milloy’s response included “Staff at the Developmental Services Ontario organization will review documentation such as school or medical records that the applicant is able to provide and will make a referral for adult applicants (age 18 and older) to have a psychological assessment completed by a ministry-funded agency if required”.

The correspondence received from the Chair of SEAC of the Near North DSB encouraging the Ministry of Education to modify the Health Curriculum so the topic of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders could be introduced was reviewed. Also reviewed was the letter from the Chair of SEAC of Wellington Catholic DSB received regarding professional development in the area of special education and also urging the Ministry to ensure that a special education preparatory course be mandated as part of the preservice programs for all Teacher Colleges in Ontario.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.