

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, April 10, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph.

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

Present from Staff were: Trudy Counter, Coordinator-Communication, Language and Speech Services, Christine Kay, Principal, Tracey Lindsay, Principal of Program, Doug Morrell, Superintendent of Program, Sandra Szpular, Special Education Coordinator / Collaborative Projects Lead.

Trustees Present: Marty Fairbairn and Jennifer Waterston.

Regrets: Sandra Roberts, Vice-Principal.

Marty Fairbairn called the meeting to order welcoming our guests.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pauline Busby moved that the Agenda of the April 10, 2013, Meeting be approved.

The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kim Brenner moved that the Minutes of the Meeting held on March 6, 2013 be approved.

The motion carried.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

Doug Morrell provided updates on the following action items:

Accessibility for Teaching

As a member of the Accessibility Steering Committee, Sandra Szpular spoke about the full-day training session for teachers being planned for the fall. Following an inquiry from Sue Shaw, clarification was provided that this pertains to staff teaching children (i.e. general accessibility awareness for staff and students, tools to teach children, being

aware of the range of needs children have).

Diagnostic Assessment in Support of Student Learning: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 155 (Question & Answer Info)

Doug Morrell reported we are waiting to receive the question and answer information from the Ministry of Education and will provide this to SEAC once received. Following an inquiry from Sue Shaw about whether we have a list of diagnostic assessments, Tracey Lindsay confirmed we do have a draft list of big scale diagnostic assessments for reading, at this time, and other assessments we are supporting are on the list however, any new ones will have to be reviewed before it can go on the list of assessments that the board approves.

Investigate issue with the link to Association websites from the Special Education page of the Upper Grand website

The issue with the website was investigated and is working again.

Adding scenarios to the pathways for students information presented

Staff will continue to work on adding to the requested information and will present this to SEAC once complete.

Feedback received from the Ministry of Education about our Special Education Report

Doug Morrell referred to concern raised about the Upper Grand DSB being compliant with The Education Act and Regulation 306 by having a Special Education Report rather than a Plan and the feedback we requested from the Ministry of Education about this concern. Following the Ministry's review of the Upper Grand DSB Report 2012, the Ministry confirmed that if the Upper Grand SEAC had been provided the opportunity to participate in the annual review of the Report, they are satisfied that the Report contains the required elements and has complied with the directions provided by the Ministry of Education in the April 30, 2012, memo. This response was also forwarded to SEAC members.

Don Richardson raised concern that to be compliant with the Act and Regulation, boards should have a Special Education Plan with goals, measurable objectives and a Report reflecting what is in the Plan. Doug Morrell commented that we will endeavor to incorporate some of the suggestions put forward and wondered about perhaps having a representative from the Ministry attend an upcoming meeting. This proposal was rejected. Following an inquiry from Carole Craig about whether we could have a Plan as well, Tracey Lindsay commented that our Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) contains special education information which we also use in the Special Education Report. The BIPSA end of year report and draft BIPSA for next year will also be brought to SEAC in June.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

Sandra Szpular, Special Education Coordinator/Collaborative Projects Lead began by referring to the 2012 Special Education Report Checklist that was provided as a reference as we await the 2013 version. This evening, the Draft Special Education

Report 2013 areas that are being reviewed fall under the Special Education Programs and Services section of the checklist. Copies of this section of the Report were also provided. Any changes or additions made were in bold print.

New to the Report this year is the addition of the Goals for Special Education which are based on the System Foci from the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) and found at the beginning of the document. In reviewing the draft Report, Sandra Szpular highlighted the changes in the document. She drew attention to the addition of the Mental Health Lead information, the shift in programs in the area of developmental education, noted the Individual Education Plan section was revised to contain more parent friendly language, spoke about the new projects and projects being worked on (i.e. The Home Use Protocol for Technology) and the additional transition supports in 2012-2013. Also new is Appendix A: Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement: Special Education Report for 2012-2013. This focuses on the Instructional Strategy goals from the BIPSA specific to special education in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Student Engagement and draws attention to what the special education department is doing to achieve our goals.

The Provincial Information and Other Related Information Required for Community sections will be reviewed and discussed at the May SEAC meeting.

Sue Shaw pointed out that although there are a number of Specialized Teams from Program Services, the report does not capture how many students were able to access the services of these specialized teams. Trudy Counter clarified that as a member of some of these teams, all schools are able to access the specialized teams through a request process. The exception would be The Crisis Response Team where team members respond as soon as a crisis occurs at one of their schools. Doug Morrell highlighted the new process being developed for accessing the Outreach Team. Marty Fairbairn inquired whether data could be compiled summarizing the number of requests received versus the number filled.

Sandra Szpular explained the role of the special education department to support staff meet BIPSA goals, facilitate schools in their work to support the School Improvement Plans noting, the appendix outlines the steps the special education department is taking to achieve the goals. Carole Craig suggested that an additional section could be included about the plans for next year and include some indicators under the goals. Tracey Lindsay added that the BIPSA end of year report will contain the goals and what we did to get there. This will be presented at the June meeting. The draft BIPSA will also be an item on the June agenda to allow an opportunity for SEAC to provide their input.

EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WEB PAGE

Doug Morrell displayed the Special Education page on the Board website and asked members for their input around the request to have a webpage developed for SEAC. The current page contains links to the SEAC brochure; Special Education Report;

Parent Guide to Special Education and the Special Education on the Ministry of Education website.

It was felt that this needs to be more parent friendly with special education related information easy to locate and although there have been improvements over the years, resources need to be easier for parents to find.

Doug Morrell noted that there is a group currently working on updating the Board website. This group is looking for feedback/parental input. He suggested that some of our SEAC members may like to be test users. Some members expressed an interest and therefore, he will notify the group.

OPEN FORUM

Sharon Dills reported the Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County is hosting a Teen Issues and ADHD session on April 13th at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. There will also be a technology based presentation on May 16th from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Community Living which will be a hands-on type presentation.

Carrie Proudfoot reported that Autism Ontario Raise the Flag Day was held on April 2nd. The Autism Ontario Wellington County events can be found on their website.

Don Richardson reported the Integration Action for Inclusion's Conference is set for May 24 and 25, 2013 at Queen's University with Dr. Cheryl Jorgensen and Dr. Caroline Musselwhite as the keynote speakers. Registration is available through the Integration Action for Inclusion website.

Kim Brenner reported that Parents for Children's Mental Health have a new address and toll free number. Children's Mental Health week is May 5 through 11, 2013. The "Change the View 2013" contest was also referred to. A link to the YouTube video will be forwarded to SEAC members.

Stacey Stevens reported that VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children has appointed an interim Executive Director.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Jennifer Waterston reported the "Relocation of Gifted Instruction in Orangeville – Final Report" was received at the April 2nd Program Committee Meeting and highlighted the process undertaken, survey results and implementation plan for students moving from Princess Elizabeth P.S. to the new Settlers Creek elementary school.

UPDATES FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PROGRAM

Doug Morrell provided the following updates:

At the March 26, 2013 Board Meeting, the Learning Choices Committee presented the

International Baccalaureate Program report which was approved by Trustees. The program will be at Guelph CVI and is expected to begin in September 2016. He also mentioned that Jason Offer was part of the Learning Choices Committee.

As part of World Autism Awareness Day, reference was made to the memo, news release and suggestions around building awareness distributed to all Principals, Vice-Principals, Special Education Resource Teachers and posted on the Board website.

A Special Parent Night Seminar on Anti-Bullying was held at King George PS on April 9th.

Today, April 10th is International Day of Pink Against Bullying, Discrimination, Homophobia and Transphobia in schools and communities.

The items to be presented at May SEAC meeting were also noted.

Sandra Szpular reported that an inservice for all elementary Resource Teachers held today was well attended. There will also be an inservice offered for elementary and secondary Teachers regarding teaching children who are deaf or hard of hearing this month.

MEETING SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION(S) AND MOTIONS

Action Items:

When the website updates begin, ensure interested SEAC members are given the opportunity to be test users in order to provide input/feedback.

Notice of Motion to be tabled at the May Meeting:

Don Richardson read a motion he would like to have tabled around Regulation 306 and Special Education Plans. Following discussion, it was requested that this be emailed to SEAC members for consideration. This will be put forward at the May SEAC meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Jennifer Waterston moved that the Meeting be adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

The motion carried.