

Upper Grand District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes
Wednesday, September 13, 2017

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph.

The following Association Members were present: Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC (teleconference); Carole Craig, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) (Alternate); Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County; Sue Shaw, Autism Ontario-Wellington County (Alternate); Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada; Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children; Sharon Dills, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington; Member-at-Large Monica Chamberlain

Present from Staff were: Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program; Audra Cook, Secondary Vice-Principal; MaryAnn Schouten, Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech Services; Heather Davis, Elementary Principal; Special Education Consultants, Mark Howe, Erin Leslie, Kim Cozzolino, Kathy Green, Jacqueline Weresch, Debbie Snow, Jackie Speers

Trustees Present: Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Martha MacNeil

Regrets: Member-at-Large, Michelle Watterson; Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario); Wendy Donaldson, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program; Special Education Consultant, Ben McCabe

Absent: Wendy McIntosh-Clodd, Secondary Vice-Principal; Hayley Warren, Secondary Vice-Principal; Christine Kay, Elementary Principal

Carrie Proudfoot, Chair of SEAC called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda of September 13, 2017

Sharon Dills moved that the agenda of September 13, 2017 be approved. Laurie Whyte seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

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Approval of Minutes of June 14, 2017

Laurie Whyte moved that the minutes of June 14, 2017 be approved. Carole Craig seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Tracey Lindsay welcomed the committee members back for the new school year. She informed SEAC that a letter of resignation was received from Cheri Herdman (LDAWC) who has taken a new position. A letter of appointment was received for Jennifer Paterson, the new representative for LDAWC, who will attend in October. She introduced MaryAnn Schouten who replaces Trudy Counter as the new Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech. She asked that everyone introduce themselves for the new staff who have joined SEAC and for the parents attending the meeting.

Regrets were received from Wendy Donaldson, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program; Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario); and Michelle Watterson, Member-at-Large

Tracey Lindsay explained that Audra Cook, previously the Vice-Principal of Erin District High School is now in a new role as Vice-Principal of Youth Options/Section 23 – Care and/or Treatment, Custodial and Correctional Services. She added that having the representation at the table is very beneficial as it informs the committee of the kinds of educational and treatment options available in our community. A review of the Section 23 programs will be added to the agenda at a later date.

Action Items

Tracey Lindsay provided updates to the following items:

- MyBlueprint - parent accounts will be launched this year and Melissa McDowall will come to SEAC in November to provide updates
- Secondary progress reports – reports were collected last year and the team is reviewing them. Recommendations will be made to the Secondary Superintendents this fall and then they will come to SEAC.

Carrie Proudfoot questioned the changes to the reporting in the Junior and Senior Kindergarten report cards. She commented that they are not helpful and asked if they could be reviewed and the suggestions submitted. Tracey Lindsay responded that the changes were implemented last year by the Ministry. She will bring the reports to SEAC, gather their feedback and forward to the Ministry for their consideration.

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Review of Annual Calendar of SEAC Business

There wasn't much to change to the calendar as it was updated at the June SEAC meeting. Topics for agendas will be discussed later in the meeting and may be added at that time. She reminded SEAC that the monthly agenda items in the calendar are to be reviewed yearly. Items of interest are added in the additional column to show as a one-time presentation.

Open Forum Activity

Tracey Lindsay proposed a new approach to the Open Forum that is usually done at the end of the meeting. She asked that each organization pair up with one of the Special Education consultants (with similar portfolios) and talk about what the parents ask them about frequently; things that the special education consultants would like to know more about; and things that we might be able to share. She will collect the feedback and reflect on how this will be applied in future meetings. Sue Shaw suggested that the sharing of best practices and celebrating the good news stories could be included in these forums. Wendy Donaldson will work with the special education consultants and bring back ideas to the October meeting.

Special Education Review

Tracey Lindsay presented the chart detailing the sections of the Special Education Plan that were reviewed for the previous years. She asked that SEAC members prioritize which sections they'd like to review this year. Committee members worked through the chart and added new topics that they felt should be considered in the Special Education Plan. Tracey Lindsay collected the working copies of the chart.

Updates – Board Website, IEP Letters and Survey

Mark Howe, Special Education Consultant, addressed SEAC and explained that the Board website was updated in the summer. The new web address is www.ugdsb.ca replacing www.ugdsb.on.ca. He demonstrated how to navigate the new website and how to access special education information. A new button (Support Documents for Parents & Guardians) has been added under Programs-Special Education. This button gives direct access to the 'Parent's Guide to Special Education', 'Parent's Guide to the Individual Education Plan' and to the 'Board Special Education Plan'. SEAC requested that 'Acronyms' be added under this button.

SEAC questioned the placement of the button in making it more visible for parents.

Questions included:

- why is this button not placed on the front page of the website; presently it is on the same page as the resources it refers to
- how do parents know to go to Program to find special education information

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- Button be added to the Program and Parents links on the landing page of website
- Button be put on the SEAC link under Parents
- Can this be one click not three

Mark Howe responded that the Special Education Department could look into whether the button could also be included on the school websites. This is a new feature and all feedback is appreciated.

SEAC asked if the link for minutes could be more specific. Presently the link opens to show all of the Board meeting minutes and agendas. Is it possible to have a separate link for SEAC which eliminates numerous clicks to access the information?

The links on the right side of the main webpage showing 'Upcoming Events' no longer open. The calendar is in chronological order but the information is not there. The button for 'parent input' has not been added. Tracey Lindsay will take SEAC's suggestions and address the concerns with the Communications department.

Mark Howe presented the standardized Elementary and Secondary letters and feedback form that were reviewed and revised over the summer. There are three letters: the annual consultation letter for existing IEPs, the IEP consultation letter for new IEPs and a letter to accompany the IEPs (sent out in October with the updated IEP). The consultation letter is to invite and engage parents to be involved in their students' IEP development. The IEP does not accompany the consultation letters. The second letter sent out in October will include the student's IEP and parents will again have the opportunity to review and provide feedback. The feedback form will be sent with the consultation letter in mid-September and used to help develop the draft of the IEP that will be sent home and is used as part of the consultation process.

A chart showing each month's activity and timelines pertaining to the steps in the IEP process was shared with SEAC. A hardcopy of the 'Parent's Guide to the IEP' had been sent home previously. A half sheet with links to the 'Parent's Guide to Special Education' and the 'Parent's Guide to the IEP', will be included with the standardized letters to provide electronic access this year, with hard copies available from the school upon request. Additional information for special education is available through the link on the bottom of this sheet.

Jason Offer asked if these documents are available in accessible format. Mark Howe commented that the documents can be made available in accessible formats, but this statement could be added to the questionnaire. This questionnaire is available

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electronically with a link provided at the top of the page when parents receive the hardcopy, so they have the option to complete it on the sheet or online.

Mark Howe commented that the links were all shortened to make it easier to enter into a Smartphone or computer. Carole Craig asked if the links could be sent out electronically to the parents. SEAC asked if the links to the survey, the feedback form and the IEP could be included.

PowerPoint presentation is uploaded to the September SEAC folder on UGCloud.

Martha MacNeil updated the committee on the status of the 'Policy Feedback' button. The decision as to where the button will reside is still being contemplated. She will continue to follow up.

Board Improvement Plan/Special Education Goals

Tracey Lindsay distributed copies of the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement to the committee for their input. She highlighted goals on the BIPSA (in green) that are related to Equity, Inclusion and Bully Prevention and the section pertaining to Special Education in yellow. She asked that the committee review the Special Education Goals for 2017-2018, compare what is presently in the BIPSA and make changes or additions as to what SEAC would like to see embedded. Feedback is to be forwarded to Tracey Lindsay.

SEAC Agenda Topics for the Year

Tracey Lindsay asked the committee to consider ideas/topics of interest that could be added to the agenda. Associations were asked to think about this for next month as agenda item is deferred to October. If anyone has suggestions, please forward to Tracey. Bring post-it notes to next meeting for this exercise.

SEISSC Monthly Update

No update. Sue Shaw asked if there were any updates to making the Boardroom accessible. Tracey Lindsay responded that at this time this is not possible but it is an ongoing item.

Open Forum

Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada, – September 9, 2017 was FASD Day. It is observed internationally and there were 40 people in attendance in Guelph. It was a great turnout as this was the first time that it was organized in this area. Laurie will send link to SEAC regarding the newspaper article advertising the event.

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Laurie Whyte requested time to show the FASD video at the end of the meeting [6 Things Educators and School Staff Should Know About FASD](#):

Sharon Dills, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington – Provided an update that the hours for the walk-in clinic were changed a year ago to 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. with the last appointment scheduled for 5:00 p.m. These hours have been working very well for clients.

Carole Craig, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) – Held an inclusion workshop in the summer that was very successful. Workshop for parents advocating for their child's IEP is being planned for the fall.

Updates from the Superintendent of Program

- Elementary and Secondary SERT in-services are scheduled for September 26th and 27th
- John Black Public School has improved their playground through the help of community sponsors. The school's playground committee has been fundraising since September 2016 and have raised over \$43,000 for the accessible playground. Intermediate benches will be installed soon and the Junior climber in the 2017-2018 year.

Trustee Report

Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy –

The Board has met twice already to be ready for the new school year. Registrations have been quite smooth with no major challenges, and new schools are possible in the future. Everything is moving forward in a positive way. State of the System is scheduled for September 14th where new educators are welcomed to the Board. And a new sports field is coming to the Erin District High School.

Martha MacNeil –

Policies that are up for review and input:

Policy 209 – Distribution of Materials in Schools from External Agencies with a deadline of October 12, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.

Policy 307 – Creative Playgrounds – review the accessibility piece in this policy from SEAC perspective. Deadline is October 12, 2017 at 4:00 p.m.

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

Summary/Action Items:

- SEAC to review kindergarten Report Card and give feedback to Ministry
- Open Forum – change the format - sharing best practices and good news. Google doc could be set up for organizations to put your information there. People will bring a good news stories from their organizations/schools to each meeting.
- Board Website – bring suggestions for parent button and the links for parent information and how to streamline to the Webmaster

Other

Adjournment

Martha MacNeil motioned for adjournment of meeting at 8:55 p.m. Sharon Dills seconded the motion.