

Upper Grand District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes
Wednesday, October 11, 2017

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, October 11, 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; Sharon Dills, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington; Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario); Jen Paterson, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County; Member-at-Large, Michelle Watterson

Present from Staff were: Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program; Wendy Donaldson, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program; MaryAnn Schouten, Coordinator of Communication, Language and Speech Services; Heather Davis, Elementary Principal; Wendy McIntosh-Clodd, Secondary Vice-Principal; Special Education Consultants, Mark Howe, Erin Leslie, Jacqueline Weresch, Debbie Snow, Jackie Speers

Trustees Present: Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy, Martha MacNeil

Regrets: Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children; Member-at-Large Monica Chamberlain

Absent: Audra Cook, Secondary Vice-Principal; Hayley Warren, Secondary Vice-Principal; Christine Kay, Elementary Principal, Special Education Consultant, Ben McCabe, Kim Cozzolino, Kathy Green

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

Approval of Agenda of October 11, 2017

A change in the order of the agenda items was requested to allow the Budget Timelines presentation to be presented earlier.

Laurie Whyte moved that the agenda of October 11, 2017 be approved as amended.
Carole Craig seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

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Approval of Minutes of September 13, 2017

Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy moved that the minutes of September 13, 2017 be approved.
Carole Craig seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Tracey Lindsay welcomed and introduced Jennifer Paterson, the new LDAWC representative to the meeting, who replaced Cheri Herdman. SEAC members introduced themselves and their affiliated associations.

Action Items

Tracey Lindsay provided updates to the following items:

- JK/SK Report cards – Denise Heaslip, Superintendent of Education, JK/SK Early Years portfolio, will come to the November SEAC meeting to present the new report cards and gather feedback for the Ministry of Education
- Open Forum – now part of the regular agenda items. This will be a round table format to share best practices and good news. Any calendar events should be uploaded to the folder on UGCloud
- Board website – Tracey Lindsay met with the Webmaster and Heather Loney, Communications Officer, to discuss the feedback that was gathered at the September SEAC meeting. All of the suggestions were implemented and will be discussed in the meeting tonight. Sue Shaw questioned if the Google Hangout in the Boardroom was included. Tracey Lindsay responded that this is being reviewed by another department and is still an outstanding item

Annual Calendar of SEAC Business

- October items are all on the agenda tonight. November items added include Denise Heaslip (JK & SK Report cards) and Melissa McDowall (myBlueprint)

Open Forum Activity

Jen Paterson, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County – Annual Family Conference being held in October 21 has over 100 people registered. The numbers have increased substantially from last year's attendance of 40.

Deborah Snow, Special Education Consultant, UGDSB – Elementary SERT workshop held at Lakeside Church on September 26th to update SERTs on new procedures and provide opportunity for PD. SERTs were asked to provide feedback and submit questions that they still had. Answers to the questions received will be included in the monthly bulletins sent to SERTs.

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Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County – gave a Best Practice example at a Guelph school of a child in JK who's parents met with school staff, went through the process of the IEP and had the IEP written at that time. The parent was pleased that everything was getting done.

Mark Howe, Special Education Consultant, UGDSB – update regarding the website. Each school website now includes a link for Parent Resources at the bottom of their landing page. Also on the UGDSB website, under Parents, the link has been added to the picture on the top right corner and in the list of menu items. He added that to view the 'Events', you will need to scroll down to 'View All' and this will take you into the details of the 'Events' in a calendar view. Another page was also added to show only SEAC agendas and minutes, and is linked from the SEAC page.

Tracey Lindsay demonstrated how the links have been improved by selecting one of the UGDSB schools. Carrie Proudfoot asked if the Special Education Resources button could be put under the Resources section as well. Sue Shaw commented that if it was there, parents wouldn't need to scroll all the way down on the first page. Tracey Lindsay commented that this is the school website and she wasn't sure we could do that at the Board level.

Sue Shaw, Autism Ontario-Wellington County – Feedback regarding the IPRC letters has been positive. The improved language makes it easier for parents to understand and allows them to provide their feedback

Sharon Dills, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington – IEP letters and the feedback form are new for some parents. She explained that one parent has fibromyalgia and can't write. The school, in conjunction with her will do the writing for her; this was a positive experience for her. CMHAWW is starting to receive requests from individual schools for their wellness days to do some presentations on mental health. Requests have already been received from Willow Road Public School to do Grade 7 and 8 classes. CMHAWW has received very positive feedback about these presentations. Sharon Dills will be on leave for a period of time and requests are being forwarded to her manager.

Jackie Speers, Special Education Consultant, UGDSB – UGDSB, along with DSO and Wellington Catholic DSB are hosting a Community Resource Fair at Centre Wellington DHS to access the North Wellington area on November 15, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Many organizations and community agencies will have information available for students and parents. Jackie Speers will update at the November SEAC meeting.

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Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) – IAI had their first strategic planning session in a number of years to plan for the next five years. The group did some positive deviance planning, which is looking at where things are going well from a positive perspective. Across the province, parents really like the workshops that IAI present and find them very helpful for integrating inclusion within the IEPs and placement discussions. A menu of workshops is being worked on along with ideas for subsidizing workshops in less fortunate areas. An anonymous donor will match funds up to \$5000 and \$3000 has been raised already. Financially, the organization is doing very well.

Barbara Lustgarten-Evoy – Over 500 Grade 6 students participated in the Community Safe Day at Centre Wellington DHS today. Workshops included building self-esteem, accountability and fun activities. It was an overall success!

Special Education Review

Wendy Donaldson commented that the feedback she received was very thorough. There are eight sections that were identified by SEAC for review. She explained that a section of the plan will be reviewed each month and the feedback incorporated after each meeting will be highlighted. This will alleviate the large document to be reviewed at the end of the year.

SEAC formed small groups to discuss the new section that was added to the Plan – Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and feedback was collected by Wendy Donaldson.

Budget Timelines

Glen Regier, Superintendent of Finance, thanked SEAC for the opportunity to present the budget process. He reviewed the current Budget Guiding Principles and the overview of the Budget Timeline. He reminded SEAC that their input into the recommended changes for the Guiding Principles and for next year's Special Education budget will occur in March through the Superintendent of Program. He provided details on the Ministry announcements and their requirements and then explained how the draft expenditure budget is assembled. A detailed review by the Director, Superintendent of Finance and Senior Administration team occurs in May. Early in June, the Board as a Budget Committee consider the draft Budget and the public has the opportunity to delegate at this time. Final approval of the budget occurs at the Board meeting at the end of June.

Sue Shaw questioned who were the "Decision Makers" identified in Guiding Principle 4 and what was the process for 'considering the impact of budget decisions on student well-being and achievement' as described in Guiding Principle 4. In response, Glen Regier stated that 'Decision Makers' in the budget context included all budget holders. Tracey

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Lindsay responded that budget requests are heard at the Executive meetings and the decision makers at the table decide how this will affect student well-being and achievement. Glen Regier added that it is a collaborative process for any initiative that is presented and discussions occur to determine how to allocate the resources. Tracey Lindsay confirmed that the Guiding Principles would be brought to the SEAC table for discussion and any potential recommendations.

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

Special Education PD Plans

Wendy Donaldson presented her PowerPoint showing the scheduled professional learning for targeted staff and provided details of workshops and in-services. She shared what has been accomplished to date and some of the plans moving ahead.

She encouraged SEAC to familiarize themselves with the 'Learning for All' document which is the basis for Special Education curriculum. It explains how to structure school environments to be inclusive and engaging and to provide good learning opportunities for all students, especially students with special needs. Her team reviewed the key chapters, brainstormed and developed some criteria for UGDSB. The data collected will define the next steps to build that capacity at UGDSB.

Sharon Dills questioned how this would affect the students that do not attend school due to mental health issues. How can we support those students? Carole Craig asked if the brainstorming results could be shared. Wendy Donaldson replied that all of the collective work that was done across the system will be merged to find commonality and common themes. Once that has been constructed, she will share the information with SEAC.

Sue Shaw commented that this will give you the best case scenario. She suggested as a counter balance; that an honest list of parental complaints be gathered. Wendy Donaldson replied that the goal would be that once the criteria has been set, it becomes the lens by which we assess where a class might be at and how, as school leaders, be giving feedback and pushing the classroom learning piece to make sure this is being addressed.

Don Richardson asked what is a special class placement in secondary? How does this relate to inclusion? Wendy Donaldson replied that is a Developmentally Disabilities/Life Skills class. Parents and school staff would come together to discuss whether this is a good placement for the specific student. Some students in this placement may spend some of their day in other classes/integrated but they might require some Life Skills instruction.

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Laurie Whyte added that in her experience with integration out of a Developmentally Delayed (DD) class is that students from the DD class don't have the same choices as other students and their needs are considered after other students pick their courses.

Tracey Lindsay responded that the parent perspective is great and she will explore this issue. Some students are in high school for seven years and then enter the workplace. Staff are looking at profiles of students and talking about pathways to help students transition earlier.

Wendy Clodd-McIntosh explained how the course selections are done at Orangeville District Secondary School. All students pick their courses at the same time and there are various options available. Therefore there are differing practices.

Wendy Donaldson concluded her presentation by providing details regarding ABA goals. She explained that staff has been trained in the special education department and in the schools. The plan for release time this year is to bring the special education teacher and individual classroom teachers, who have students who could benefit from ABA strategies, together and to build these relationships.

The last piece is a collaborative project between the curriculum and special education department. All of the teams will come together once a month to do professional learning. In November and December, the program department staff will be developing professional learning for MID and LD teachers, including the SRA and Wilson programs. January to April, PD will be geared towards best practices on student instruction with the focus on numeracy and literacy skills.

Don Richardson questioned the definition of inclusive education and an inclusive classroom. He added that in his organization the default is the mainstream classroom with the diversity of students with a teacher and special education consultant working together in one classroom. He suggested that UGDSB determine the definition of inclusion.

Wendy Donaldson responded that inclusion is defined by the environment that the student is in – is it inclusive? Is it an environment that allows them to interact in a meaningful and engaging way.

PowerPoint presentation has been uploaded to SEAC folder for October.

SEAC Agenda Topics for the Year

Wendy Donaldson distributed a sheet for the committee to complete for suggestions for presentations and ideas. Tracey Lindsay asked SEAC members to think about the way they would like to do this exercise. An option would be to use a dot matrix for the topics. She reminded SEAC that elections will be held in December. This will be discussed at the November meeting.

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Several topics were brought forward and will be included on the sheet for next month's activity:

- After school programs
- Board learning from associations
- Themes that are recurring and where you can find them easily throughout the year
- Inclusion workshop
- Transition presentation (Sue Shaw and Jason Offer)
- What problems are people having
- Fewer people are joining associations - can we reach out to them
- mechanism for sharing broader with parents
- Don Richardson commented that he was happy with the approach that the Special Education Plan was being reviewed. He asked if SEAC would be able to provide input into the Special Education Goals at the beginning of the review.
- Sue Shaw requested that the Glossary be included in the Plan.

SEISSC Monthly Update

No update. Next meeting is scheduled for November 22, 2017

Open Forum

Updates from the Superintendent of Program

- UGDSB participated in Orange Shirt Day on September 29th. Orange Shirt Day is an opportunity for people to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and to keep discussing openly all aspects of residential schools. When reflecting on Orange Shirt Day, UGDSB First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Curriculum Lead Colinda Clyne said, 'The day is a great opportunity to begin discussions about a part of Canadian history many people don't know, the long history of residential schools and how knowing this, changes our lenses and actions for the future.'

**Trustee Report
Martha MacNeil –**

Martha MacNeil reminded SEAC that the deadline for Policy 307 – Creative Playgrounds is October 12, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. She asked SEAC to review the accessibility section of this policy and provide feedback. Policy 209 – Distribution of Materials in Schools from External Agencies, also has the same deadline.

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy/>

The Parent Involvement Committee is hosting Dr. Laura Markham, founding editor of AhaParenting.com on November 8, 2017 at Centennial CVI in Guelph and November 9, 2017 at Westside Secondary School in Orangeville. Information booths and refreshments

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will be set up at 6:15 p.m. with the presentation, 'How to Get Your Child Cooperating without Yelling, Threats or Punishment' starting at 6:45 p.m.

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/pic/2017/09/21/how-to-get-your-child-cooperating-without-yelling-threats-or-punishment/>

Career Education Council (CEC) job fair will be held at Centennial CVI on November 15, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The fair allows parents and students to connect with exhibitors from various businesses, education and community organizations.

<http://www.careereducationcouncil.ca/yfyc/>

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

Summary/Action Items:

- Action Item – inquire to see if the Parent Resources can be added to the Resource section of school website
- Action Item – options for students in DD classes – get parent perspective on how this happens at the different sites. Tracey Lindsay will give this recommendation to Carlo Zen and Student Success
- Sue Shaw reminded the committee that presentation material should be available to SEAC prior to the meeting
- New Draft of Ministry Special Education in Ontario 2017 supersedes Special Education: A Guide for Educators (2001)

Other

Adjournment

Laurie Whyte motioned for adjournment of meeting at 9:20 p.m.