

Upper Grand District School Board
Special Education Advisory Committee

Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2020

The Special Education Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the MS Teams virtual meeting platform.

The following Association Members were in attendance: Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County; Jason Offer, Association for Bright Children-ABC; Monica Chamberlain, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County; Stacey Stevens, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children; Kelsey Noseworthy, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children (Alternate); Mandi Naismith, Autism Ontario-Wellington County (Alternate); Shelley Marks, OPVIC/VIEWWS (Ontario Parents for Visually Impaired Children)

Present from staff were: Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program; Wendy Donaldson, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program; Chad Guyitt, Elementary Principal; Audra Cook, Secondary Vice-Principal

Trustees Present: Jennifer Edward, Robin Ross

Regrets: Laurie Whyte, FASworld Canada; Denise Helm, Canadian Mental Health Association Wellington Waterloo; Michelle Barrett, OPVIC/VIEWWS (Ontario Parents for Visually Impaired Children (Alternate);

Absent: Don Richardson, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario); Danielle Richer, FASworld Canada (Alternate); Erin Knight, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario) (Alternate)

Carrie Proudfoot, Chair, welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting.

Approval of Agenda of June 10, 2020

Monica Chamberlain moved that the agenda of June 10, 2020 be approved. Mandi Naismith seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of May 13, 2020

Robin Ross moved that the minutes of May 13, 2020 be approved. Jason Offer seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

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Action Items

Two outstanding items were discussed:

- Letter of Support for Windsor-Essex Catholic DSB – regarding the changes to the provincial funding model for class size averages and mandatory e-learning courses. - Checking relevancy
- Letter of Support for Greater-Essex County DSB – County is calling on the Ministry of Education to fill outstanding vacancies on MASCE so that the committee can resume its previous duties. Jason Offer was going to check into the relevancy of this letter at this time and he would investigate whether they did meet. He will draft letter once a contact name is found. He noted that based on prior letters from other SEACs the committee has not met in three years and the last report submitted to the Ministry was in 2016 and there is a 50% vacancy on this Board.

Open Forum – Best Practice and Good News

Monica Chamberlain, Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County – LDAWC will be running an on-line SOAR (Some Assembly Required) Transition to Highschool-Skills Course in July or July/August. Registration will be up soon. This will be a six session course, either twice weekly or once weekly. Classes will 1.5 hours. They will also be offering a Typing Skills Course on-line for 8 weeks in July and August (once weekly on Wednesdays). Time of day to be determined. Registration will be up soon. The 6th Annual Free Family Conference for October 17th is still being planned. If one of the grants is received that LDAWC has applied for, they will be able to run a virtual conference if needed.

Shelly Marks, OPVIC/VIEWS (Ontario Parents for Visually Impaired Children) - June 3rd at 8:00 p.m. CNIB & OPVIC/Views had Zoom Parent Resource Meeting. Mabel Chow presented on Braille at Home with Your Child, Parent. On June 10th at 8:00 p.m. CNIB & OPVIC/Views have a Zoom Parent Resource Meeting- 'Transition Planning for the Individual Education Plan (IEP)', presented by Ryan Machete, Transitional Coordinator at Peel District School Board. On June 17th at 8:00 p.m. CNIB & OPVIC/Views will be having a Zoom Parent Resource Meeting on Advocacy with Kat Clarke, CNIB Manager, Advocacy and Government Affairs (Ontario & Quebec). Position paper: "Case Analysis: An Essential Tool for TVI Service Delivery in Ontario School Boards" to be posted on VIEWS On website, the last week of June.

Carrie Proudfoot, Autism Ontario-Wellington County – Autism Ontario has summer funding available for children up to the age of 18 that was posted on their website today: <https://www.autismontario.com/camp>

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Policy Review

Currently no policies for public consultation.

Learning at Home Report

Tracey Lindsay began her presentation by informing SEAC that this presentation was shared with Trustees last week. It is an update to the information about the learning at home initiatives that were presented to SEAC at the last meeting. Through collaboration, ingenuity, and hard work, Information Technology, Program Services, Elementary and Secondary Curriculum, Early Years, Equity, and Senior Administration worked behind the scenes to support staff, students and the community, including parents/guardians, in our new reality.

She provided details and gave examples of synchronous learning (online or distance education that happens in real time) and asynchronous learning (occurs through online or other channels without real-time interaction). She detailed the numerous supports for staff, students and parents for each of the learning platforms.

Information of additional supports was also discussed which included: Community Outreach and Special Projects; Specialized Programming & Experiential Learning and protocols for Accessing Buildings/Sites.

She shared some of the many success stories from the teacher and student perspective.

Carrie Proudfoot asked if the icon for Mental Health in the student google environment could be moved up to be more accessible. She commented that the pink box on the site takes up much of the screen and students would not see it if they did not scroll down. The icon is between the Report Bullying Tool icon and PaperCut. Tracey Lindsay replied that she will connect with the Mental Health Lead to ensure that the Mental Health icon is more visible.

Monica Chamberlain commented that Guidance staff has been very helpful in a lot of changes for course selections for next year. COVID has had a huge impact. Tracey Lindsay replied that we are anticipating lots of guidance changes and guidance is aware.

If anyone has questions about this presentation, please contact Tracey Lindsay.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the June SEAC folder on UGCloud.

Summer Learning Plans

Tracey Lindsay began the presentation by explaining that the Ministry of Education had put out a memo and announced funding for a robust Summer Learning program at a

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press conference in May 2020. This funding is to provide for new programs and initiatives for students to continue learning over the summer.

She shared the options that are already in place and the opportunities that will be offered to students for July and August. All courses will be delivered virtually. Some of these include the following:

Summer courses (these are offered each year at summer school but this year the Ministry has provided funding for additional staffing for special needs students). Boards will be able to use their allocation for additional staffing resources (e.g. special education resource teachers, educational assistants), to support students with special education needs in both expanded and new summer program offerings.

Summer Credit Programs – Ministry Direction

- ✓ Expanded Enrolment in Summer – Credit Programs - Summer School - To accommodate student demand for summer credit courses, school boards should plan to expand existing summer school credit programming through remote teacher-led learning, online learning, and through correspondence/self-study.
- ✓ Independent Learning Courses - School boards can continue to enroll interested students in TVO's Independent Learning Centre (ILC).

Summer Credit Programs at UGDSB

- ✓ Online (Elearning) Summer School courses delivered via Brightspace
- ✓ "Traditional" Summer School - New Credits - delivered virtually in 2020
- ✓ Dual Credit Summer School
- ✓ Credit Recovery Summer Program
- ✓ NEW - Gr. 8 Reach-Ahead Credits
- ✓ Summer Coop - Regular & High Skills

Learning and Consolidation and Upgrading – Ministry Direction

- ✓ New Upgrading Courses - For summer 2020, school boards will be able to offer students in Grades 9 to 12 the opportunity to review and strengthen key learning in a course they passed during the school closure period in the 2019-20 school year.

Learning and Consolidation and Upgrading at UGDSB

- ✓ NEW - Secondary Upgrading Credits
- ✓ Gr. 6/7/8 Literacy & Numeracy Support Programs

ESL Programs at UGDSB

- ✓ Gr. 7 & 8 ESL Summer School
- ✓ Adult ESL Summer Learning Program

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Programs for Vulnerable Students – Ministry Direction

- ✓ School boards are also encouraged to expand their numeracy and literacy summer supports programs in 2020 through remote learning and in partnerships with delivery agents, such as the CODE Summer Learning Program, Frontier College, and through remote delivery of school board non-credit Literacy and Math programs (Learning Outside the School Day).

Summer Learning Program (formerly Camp Lift-Off) at UGDSB

Virtual Summer Learning Program to support students entering Gr 2 or 3 in September
Literacy & Numeracy Focused

- ✓ skill-based program for Grade 2 and Grade 3 students experiencing social and economic challenges for 3 week half day (morning) program (15 days) from July 6th - July 24th

Summer Mental Health Supports – Ministry Direction

- ✓ Mental Health Supports – Funding will also allow for the ongoing provision of mental health support to students over the summer months who are struggling with mental health concerns.

Summer Mental Health Supports at UGDSB

- ✓ Continued 1:1 support for students with mental health needs through the summer
- ✓ Crisis and VTRA response services extended through summer
- ✓ On-going collaborative work with community partners to support students and families
- ✓ New referrals identified as high risk can be accepted onto caseload during the summer
- ✓ Staff and Supervisors/Lead will work on planful and expanded transition supports for re-entry

New Summer Transition Programs – Ministry Direction

- ✓ New Summer Transition Program – In addition to the summer programming outlined above, school boards will also be provided with a one-time allocation to provide summer transition programs for students with special education needs and/or students with mental health needs.

New Summer Transition Programs at UGDSB

- ✓ A system inventory will be developed to determine the students in our board that will require HIGH RISK transition supports for the fall of 2020 due to Mental Health or Special Education needs
- ✓ Program Leaders, consultation with system leaders, will develop a menu of targeted Transition Programs that will be made available during the last 2 weeks of August 2020

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- ✓ Programs will target 3 main approaches: larger group sessions in students' home schools, small ground targeted sessions in a centralized location and individualized transition programs to support complex student profiles.
- ✓ Parents and community partners will be consulted to support alignment between home, school and community approaches for students.
- ✓ Multidisciplinary teams, with direct collaboration between both schools and program services department staff, will be hired to run program offerings during the last 2 weeks prior to school
- ✓ Design and delivery of transition coping and skill building groups for students across the board's regions facilitated by mental health professionals
- ✓ Parent support, resources and collaborative planning
- ✓ Individual 1:1 student support with mental health professionals to ensure individualized needs are met and supported
- ✓ School teams, CST teams, specialized mental health teams involved in collaborative
 - ✓ planning
 - ✓ Development of resources for student and parent websites specific to skills and tools for transition
 - ✓ Working collaboratively with community partners

After School Skills Development – Ministry Direction

- ✓ After-School Skills Development Programs (ASSDPs) - These programs provide students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) with additional targeted skills development opportunities, outside of the instructional day, to better equip them for classroom success and to achieve other outcomes such as improved social and communication skills.

After School Skills Development at UGDSB

- ✓ Board Special Education, ABA, SLP and Psychology staff will reflect on current and potential course offerings that could be adapted to support virtual and in-person programs as part of the After School Skills Development Programs
- ✓ Staff offerings will be assessed and reviewed by Program Leaders to refine the offerings for this summer
- ✓ Special Education staff will work with Continuing Education to have the courses uploaded in the Summer Platform
- ✓ Staff will be secured
- ✓ Student Registration will be completed through the Continuing Education platform
- ✓ Courses will include a skill monitoring process to measure growth/development of skills
- ✓ Staff will report participant skill acquisition as part of their reporting requirements

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Child Care Centres, Full Day Programs, Summer Camps

On May 19th, the Ontario government announced “a gradual reopening of childcare is expected to begin when the province transitions to Stage 2”. These include Licensed Child Care Centres (0-4yrs); Before and After School Programs (4-12yrs) and Summer Camps.

Monica Chamberlain noted that the two landing pages for summer school on the Board website were not properly updated to reflect all the summer school offerings this year. She also asked what was Brightspace. Tracey Lindsay replied that she will look into the website and ensure information is updated. She added that Brightspace is another learning platform like the Google Classroom that teachers can go on for teaching and learning. It is the D2L Learning platform for e-learning in Ontario.

Mandi Naismith asked what will be the criteria to be able to take part in the ASD summer program? Wendy Donaldson replied that there are multiple courses and staff will be meeting with HR and discussing next steps tomorrow. Programs will be divided into Junior, Intermediate and High School so they are age appropriate and geared to their unique needs to make it relevant for them.

Carrie Proudfoot asked where the information for all the Summer Learning Plans and Mental Health would be advertised. Are there any age restrictions? Where would parents find this information? Tracey Lindsay replied that the Board website, school website will post this information. She added that parents will be contacted for students that will be transitioned. All students that are already on caseloads, students with ASD for the ASD program and students already identified with particular needs will receive this information. New student caseloads will have information sent home. Information will be communicated in as many avenues as possible.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the June SEAC folder on UGCloud.

Special Education Plan 2020 - 2021 – Final Approval

Wendy Donaldson commented that no other feedback was received to the Special Education Plan 2020-2021. This is the final draft and will go to Board at the end of June for approval and then be sent to the Ministry. She thanked SEAC for all their work and guidance throughout the year.

Final Draft of the Special Education Plan 2020-2021 was uploaded to the June SEAC folder on UGCloud.

Gifted Education

Tracey Lindsay addressed SEAC and noted that the discussions regarding administering the CCAT (Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test) this fall were discussed last

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month. SEAC was asked to provide feedback on the possible decision to postpone the testing for a year. Students would be tested in Grade 4 instead of Grade 3.

Jason Offer responded that he had concerns of postponement of a year. He asked what prevents the board from planning to administer the test. This is four months out and we could wait to see how the environment is with students coming back in the fall. The decision is based on tremendous upheaval and there will be challenges with re-adjustments but it's still unknown what will happen. Why do we need to make the decision at this time? Tracey Lindsay replied that it isn't just about administering the test, there is a lot of preparation before administering. Teachers need to be trained; students have to be prepared; psychologists have to prep; and the dates scheduled.

Psychologists have concerns as we don't know what we're going back to; students may only be coming back half time; or half the class will be there; Tracey Lindsay added that staff is needed now to support emotional wellbeing, safety, trauma, and getting students back into the classroom as opposed to diverting them to implementing the CCAT. CCAT preparation and implementation is done through September and October and requires a lot of time and resources. Students returning in the fall would not be prepared academically and emotionally and it would be unfair and unethical to implement the testing.

Teachers selecting students or nominating them for testing was also discussed. Some students are ready to move ahead. Tracey Lindsay replied that there is also the equity piece. We wouldn't pick or choose. If there aren't many students then it's a lot of preparation and if students don't make the 98th percentile, parents would be upset. Carrie Proudfoot asked if there is an option to offer enriched programming. Tracey Lindsay replied that teachers can do diagnostic assessments to determine student levels so that students can be accommodated in the regular classroom. If a parent has a child that needs accommodation and they feel this isn't happening, she encouraged them to speak to the teachers. Special Education Consultants are also available for extra help and parents need to advocate for their students.

Carrie Proudfoot acknowledged the concerns that were voiced. She added that there will be lots on UGDSB's plate in September and that is all appreciated. She asked how do we encourage parents to speak up and not get lost in the cracks if they are not connected to any of the organizations. Is there a way that the Board can communicate this information?

Tracey Lindsay replied that in the newly created Parent Website for Special Education this information can be included. This is the message that will be given out to our Principals, Vice Principals, Special Education Resource teachers, etc. so that everyone

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has the same message. Carrie Proudfoot asked if the information regarding the Parent website with the information could be communicated out at the end of the year.

SEISSC Monthly Update

No update - no meeting.

Tracey Lindsay shared that the Board is having a special Board meeting next Tuesday, June 16, 2020, 7:00 p.m. to roll out the new UGDSB Equity Plan 2019-2022. The Plan was delayed due to labour and COVID and the Board felt that they couldn't wait any longer with everything that is happening. They will be discussing the equity work that is being done now and anti-racism. The Plan is posted on the website:

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/UGDSB-Equity-Plan-2019-2022-FINAL-v3.pdf>

This is a public meeting and will be live streamed for anyone interested in attending. Link shared with SEAC: <https://livestream.com/ugstream>.

Trustee Report

Jennifer Edwards –

- ✓ Trustees are expecting a draft document from the Ministry tomorrow about the re-opening of schools in September. Ministry is looking for feedback.
- ✓ Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding information is expected next week. Board will be meeting through the summer to finalize budgets. This is usually completed in June.
- ✓ Read email from Cheryl Van Ooteghem, Superintendent of Education regarding the UGDSB Equity Three Year Plan and anti-racism
- ✓ June is National Pride Month. Sixty-nine of the seventy-six schools are flying the Rainbow Pride flag this year. It is the choice of individual schools to fly the flag. The Board Policy 310 for flying flags is on website. Policies are generally reviewed every five years.
- ✓ June is also National Indigenous History Month and Colinda Clyne our FNMI Lead has put many resources on the website for teachers to use.

Robin Ross –

Most students have picked up their belongings from the schools. The process went very well after working with Public Health for about 4-6 weeks to get the protocol set up.

Updates from the Superintendent of Program

Glen Regier, Superintendent of Finance would have brought the budget to SEAC last month but the GSNs are still not out yet. The Ministry has not shared the funding piece

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so the budget is not completed. The Board will probably convene during the summer to work on the budget and gather input. As SEAC is to be consulted, we may need to convene in the summer or share it another way, and to gather feedback before it is presented to the Trustees for approval.

With the approval of the Special Education Plan 2020-2021 tonight, it will go to Board at the end of the month. Trustees will approve it and then it will be submitted to the Ministry. The Special Education Report, that we at UGDSB do yearly, is not a requirement for the Ministry. This year we will not present a report as the work could not be completed due to Labour issues and COVID. This year's goals will be rolled into the next year's plan.

Mandi Naismith asked if the delay in budget details would have an impact on the resources that the kids will get when they return in the fall. Tracey Lindsay replied that as we do not have the GSN information for next year we are staffing status quo as this past year. We will be increasing the EA budget as we will require more supports in September (if we are back). We are going up in supports not down in Special Education.

Jason Offer asked if notes could be posted to the Drive for budget information for summer meeting.

Monica Chamberlain asked if anyone had any insight into the projected class size numbers for the online synchronous learning. Tracey Lindsay replied that we do not. If 100 students register, then the appropriate number of teachers would be hired. We are not restricting the number of students.

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

No actions

Other

Carrie Proudfoot expressed the need for some kind of communication for SEAC for parents to get in contact with them directly. Many parents do not have an association that they are associated with may have questions and need guidance over the summer months. Tracey Lindsay responded that we have the Parent website that would be the best place for parents to get information. There is a section for community partners and SEAC. If you give us all of the contact information, we will include it here. She added that every school website has that Parent website.

Carrie Proudfoot asked if a SEAC email could be included to make it easier for parents to access contact information quickly. Tracey Lindsay suggested that Carrie Proudfoot write letter of this process which can be posted on the Parent website. Wendy

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Donaldson offered to put a SEAC button right on the Parent page with all of SEAC's contact information that parents could access directly. Send email to Wendy Donaldson with information that you would like posted.

Tracey Lindsay replied that SEAC email addresses are on the SEAC contact information. Wendy Donaldson will put a SEAC button on the Parent website. She asked that SEAC go through the website and check through all of the resources and links. Carrie Proudfoot asked if the possibility of an email for SEAC could be set up.

Adjournment

Stacey Stevens motioned for adjournment of meeting at 9:00 p.m. Jason Offer seconded the motion.

Have a great summer!