

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 16, 2019, 6:30 P.M.

A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was held this date in the Education Centre, 400 Taunton Road East, Whitby.

ROLL CALL:

Claudine Burrell, Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter
Craig Cameron, Member At Large
Tara Culley, Durham Down Syndrome Association
Elizabeth Daniel, Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders
Rowin Jarvis, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region
Kathy Kedey, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children
Eva Kyriakides, Association for Bright Children (ABC) (SEAC Chair)
Carolyn McLennon, Member At Large
Hanah Nguyen, Easter Seals Ontario

Trustees: Donna Edwards Christine Thatcher

Staff: Superintendent Andrea McAuley
Special Education Officer Kyla McKee

Recording Secretary: Diane Kent

1. Call to Order:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Welcome Guests:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides welcomed special guests: Jack Barclay, Elementary Representative, Janet Cairns, Secondary Representative and Lisa Drake, Chief of Speech Language and Hearing Services.

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides advised that the Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

3. Regrets:

Regrets:

- Elizabeth Daniel, Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders

4. Approval of Agenda:

That the agenda for May 16, 2019 be approved.

MOVED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards SECONDED BY: Kathy Kedey

CARRIED

5. Approval of the Minutes from April 25, 2019:

That the minutes from April 25, 2019 be approved.

MOVED BY: Kathy Kedey SECONDED BY: Carolyn McLennon

CARRIED

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – May 2019:

Inclusive Student Services – Setting Our Direction

Our department meets together as a full team at key points in the school year. Our recent meeting had focus on setting direction for the 2019-2020 and the development of School Support Plans. As an outcome of our recent service review, we will be approaching our service lens at both the school level as well as at individual student level. Staff used “Thought Exchange” to provide input into use of data (type and source) and conditions for collaboration. To support this work, we reviewed the flow of planning from system (DDSB Strategic Priorities and Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being) to school (School Improvement Plans for Achievement and Well-Being) through to individualized student supports.

During our meeting, we also highlighted the recent presentation to Board, reviewed scope of changes to Special Education classes for next year and were in-serviced regarding supporting children and youth in need of protection. To give staff the opportunity to reflect on impact and growth, a strategy of ‘inside/outside circle’ was used to provide opportunity for individual connection on growth supported for an educator in the system, professionals own recent learning and a student growth success with lens of naming what was key in making a difference.

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – May 2019 (cont'd)

Our celebration as a department – tremendous ‘turn the curve’ success for two students (success shared whole group without identifying information) who had previously experienced great challenges. At core of both stories, partnership. Partnership with families, community partners and all levels of the DDSB from classroom to system.

Speech Language Pathology (SLP)/Hearing Services



Each May, Speech-Language and Audiology Canada promote the awareness of speech, language and hearing health and the importance of communication intervention. The speech, language and hearing team created and implemented an awareness event for staff and students at the Education Centre on May 3rd using interactive activities. This fun event was well received by those who attended.

The Speech-Language Pathologists started early in the promotion of effective communication within schools. On April 16th, a workshop entitled ‘Taking Care of Your Voice’ was provided to educators and administrators. This is important information for professionals who spend a great deal of time projecting their voices to groups of people, which puts them at a greater risk for vocal cord damage.

During the week of May 6th, a team of speech-language pathology students from the University of Western Ontario came to Durham Region to continue research with some of our senior kindergarten students. The aim of the research is to determine the validity of the assessment tool used by our speech-language pathologists in the kindergarten intervention program. Final results of the research are expected to be communicated to the team later in 2019.

The team will also connect with university students in their role as clinical educators. On May 10th, speech-language pathology students from the University of Toronto will continue to develop their clinical knowledge while working with our speech-language pathologists to complete final kindergarten assessments. The data obtained from these assessments will give our team information about the effectiveness of the kindergarten program.

‘**Dress Loud**’ day is being celebrated across the board this month. Seneca Trail PS celebrated on Friday, May 3rd. Students in the school made posters about hearing loss and do’s and don’ts for communicating with students with hearing loss. Glen Dhu PS is celebrating on May 10th. Students there are collecting money to donate to VOICE. There are raffle prizes and opportunities to visit the library for a 20-minute information session on hearing loss. Many other schools have various events planned throughout the month.

‘**Kids Like Me Day**’ was May 8th at the Abilities Center in Whitby. This is a day for students with hearing loss to celebrate hearing, learning and belonging. Plans for today include drumming, roller sledge hockey, sitting volleyball, Bingo, handball, wheelchair skills and team building and inclusion activities. Today’s event includes students from grades JK to 6. Our older students will have a similar celebration next week on May 16th.

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – May 2019 (cont'd)

Psychological Services

Psychological Services staff continue to provide services to fulfill their five service functions of: *consultation, assessment, direct service, crisis response and capacity building*.

Currently, staff are working with the integrated team to assess student needs for placement in DDSB's small class placements. Staff also will be finalizing current referrals for assessment, consultations and direct service for the remainder of the year, and will look toward developing a plan for responsive school assignments for the 2019-2020 school year.

Social Work/Attendance

The Social Work and Attendance team continues to provide assessment and direct service to students, as well as supports to school teams. As the end of the school year approaches, the team is coordinating services to ensure that students who require supports through the summer months are connected to services. This has proven to be challenging in some situations as there are lengthy wait lists in the Durham region.

The team has been actively orienting the new Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services to the Family of Schools, providing a rich understanding of the unique needs of schools and communities. In addition, the team is beginning to plan for the coming school year. We are looking at ways to better capture service volume to inform service needs and outcomes. The team is also planning for opportunities to deliver social work services in a variety of ways, including offering more small groups which will allow us to reach and support more students.

Stone Soup - Helping Students with Autism Succeed in Regular Classrooms

On May 8th, approximately, twelve DDSB Inclusive Education Services staff from the Autism Resource Team and Psychological Services, Speech and Language Services and Instructional Facilitator teams attended Lake Ridge Community Support Services' Stone Soup workshop presentation by speaker William L. Heward, Ed.D., BCBA-D (College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University) in Ajax. In addition to a teaching and research portfolio at Ohio State, Dr. Heward is the author of several special education and Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) instructional texts, including the forthcoming, *Applied Behavior Analysis, 3rd. Edition* (Pearson, 2020). During the engaging full-day workshop, entitled "Helping Students with Autism Succeed in Regular Classrooms," Dr. Heward highlighted opportunities in special education to identify, prioritize, and teach quality of life-increasing behaviours (most often, social, communication, and independent skills) to increase students' sense of control over their environments, social effectiveness, and capacity for self-direction now, and in the future. The enduring value of ABA and evidence-based methods for teaching and intervening with students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms was reinforced using practical exemplars, video, and links to a repository of online resources provided to attendees.

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – May 2019 (cont'd)

Some key guidelines and recommendations for intervention presented to attendees included:

- Taking the long view: making the most of current opportunities to plan interventions that will improve student quality of life now and in the future ("*Next Year is Now*")
- Selecting and teach skills for maximum efficiency and impact
- Focusing on 'alterable variables,' aspects of the student's learning environment that are within our control
- Encouraging engagement (Active Student Responding) for individuals and groups through a variety of methods
- Planning programs that will promote generalization of skills and likelihood of behaviour change
- Measuring student performance directly and frequently, and use successes and failures alike to plan

Upcoming Learning Opportunities	Date (s)
What Educators Know about Teaching Kids with Autism – a wish list	May 22, 2019
Augmentative & Alternative Communication Across the Classroom (Core Vocabulary – Part 2)	June 7, 2019
Behaviour Management Basic Training	June 7, 2019
Behaviour Management System Refresher	June 7, 2019
Boardmaker Online	June 7, 2019
Differentiated Structures	June 7, 2019
Google Read & Write for Educational Assistants	June 7, 2019
Executive Functioning Skills for Students	June 7, 2019
Making Functional Behaviour Assessment work for me in the Classroom	June 7, 2019
STAR Discrete Trial Workshop	June 7, 2019
Structure for All	June 7, 2019
Structuring for Social and Play Skill Development in the Kindergarten Classroom	June 7, 2019
SafeTALK	June 7, 2019

7. Presentation:

Speech Language and Hearing Services

Lisa Drake, Chief of Speech Language and Hearing Services provided SEAC members with a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the 2017-18 student stats; capacity building and 2019-2020 system planning. Lisa also noted that May is Better Speech and Hearing Month. Many activities took place such as a 50/50 draw for the Ontario Association for Families with Communication Disorders (OAFCCD); schools participated in Dress Loud Day for VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children and a Speech Language and Hearing Awareness Day was celebrated in the Atrium of the Education Centre.

8 a). Business Arising from the Minutes:

- “Draft” Provincial Funding Model for Class Size Averages and Mandatory E-Learning Letter to Minister of Education

Committee members reviewed the “draft” letter and provided their feedback to SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides. It was agreed upon that after the changes were incorporated into the letter, it could be sent to the Minister of Education.

8 b). Scheduled Discussion Period:

The open discussion period was used to discuss the following topic:

- Inclusive Classrooms

Committee members paired and shared suggestions and strategies that may foster inclusive classrooms within school communities. SEAC members shared some of their reflections:

- Keep language simple; avoid the acronyms so that everyone understands what you are talking about.
- Support students to advocate for themselves, but to also build self-advocacy skills
- Find ways to support students’ whose cognitive/social abilities may not be at the same level as their peers, to engage socially and academically with peers in order to allow them to truly actively participate.
- Consider the physical design of the classroom; is it accessible for all students? Have you considered the needs of all students-our hearing/visually impaired are often overlooked in planning; design with dignity in mind.
- Is the focus on inclusion? Or are students being withdrawn in order to get the support they need?
- Are students with special needs at the heart of field trip planning? Is there a way to provide an inclusive option at the school instead of needing to travel?
- As class sizes continue to increase, how are we making sure to support those with hearing and attention needs? Accessibility needs (more students means more furniture).
- Using closed captioning feature on PowerPoint/Google presentation slides.
- Student presentations to be offered video or Podcast options to reduce anxiety.

9. Reports:

Administration:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley

At this time, 2019-2020 school year funding has not yet been released by the Ministry.

The 2019 Special Education Plan is in the works but remains draft as guidelines are not yet available.

As always, feedback from SEAC members is welcome. Any input requested by end of May. Of note - Standard 7: Health Care - as changes unfold. We will be annotating "DDSB" or "Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care" to delineate the responsibilities for specific services.

SEAC is thanked for input last month into the Pathways to Intervention and Support" flow chart. Your recommendations are being embedded and will be reflected in the final document that will also be included in the Special Education Plan this year.

Please continue to check in on our @SpecEdDDSB twitter posts. We have many athletes competing at the Special Olympics Ontario games this week and are retweeting posts from the school teams.

We would also like to thank the team at Bobby Orr Public School for hosting an indoor track and field event for elementary students from Developmental programs across the DDSB today (May 16). Students and staff participated in a number of events with focus on communication, fine and gross motor tasks. Tremendous smiles and connections from all. The leadership of the Intermediate students in captaining teams for the "Amazing Race" of activities was also greatly appreciated.

Our recent Department meeting had focus on planning for the school year ahead. Together we linked from our six system priorities - through the Board Improvement Plan, School Improvement Plan to the School Support Plans in development (overview shared with SEAC).

Special Education Officer Kyla McKee

We are pleased to share the resource brochures created for each small class placement; brochure for the gifted program is in development. Brochures highlight the program outcomes of each individual program, program supports and staffing for each specific class type. These brochures will be made available through the DDSB website.

Committee members provided their feedback on the new small class brochures. Some concerns expressed were: that a brochure for a regular class was missing or needed; bus transportation to small class locations and transparency in being supportive with families. Superintendent Andrea McAuley thanked SEAC for their input and will inquiry with Accountability and Assessment regarding seeking feedback from families of children with special needs in school settings.

Board:

Trustee Donna Edwards informed committee members that the Board of Trustees received presentations on Future City Competition: Powering Our Future; Secondary Faces on the Data Case Conference and the DDSB Well-Being and Mental Health Plan System Implementation at the Standing Committee meeting on Monday, May 6, 2019.

Trustee Donna Edwards advised that the OPSBA Board of Directors met April 4- 5, 2019. She noted that presentations were received from the Ontario Student Trustees Association (OSTA) regarding their recently released Vision Document: The Students' Vision for Education. The depth of research students engaged in resulting in the recommendations was impressive. The link to the document was shared with SEAC members.

10. Association Reports:

Autism Ontario – Durham Region

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is engaging in a month-long series of public Ontario Autism Consultations and on-line surveys on how children and youth with autism, including complex needs can be supported.

Autism Ontario is now accepting applications for the 2019 One-to-One Summer Support Worker Reimbursement Fund. Further details can be found at <https://www.autismontario.com/chapters/durham-region>.

Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region (LDADR)

The next monthly speaker series will take place on Thursday, May 30, 2019 at Trent University Durham, in Oshawa at 7:00 p.m. This month's workshop presentation will be on the topic of Executive Functioning and Emotional Regulation.

VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

The 27th Annual VOICE Conference was held on May 3rd and 4th at Centennial College in Toronto.

Dress Loud Day 2019 – pick any Friday in the month of May to celebrate with VOICE by participating in the annual Dress Loud Day. This day is to raise awareness and funds to support programs for children with hearing loss.

Kathy Kedey thanked the Durham DSB for organizing the “Teens/Kids Like Me Days” at the Abilities Centre on May 9 and 16th. She noted that the cost of \$20.00 per student to attend the event was manageable by some parents but not all; as well some students could not attend due to lack of transportation.

11. Correspondence/Attachments:

- Ottawa Carleton DSB

12. Questions and Comments:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides put forth a suggestion for committee members to receive a presentation on the recently released Vision Document: The Students' Vision for Education. Trustee Donna Edwards noted that she would extend an invitation to one of the Student Trustees to present at the June SEAC meeting.

13. Celebrations and Success:

There were no celebrations or successes at this time.

14. Next S.E.A.C. meeting – June 13, 2019 in Room 2007.

15. Adjournment:

That the meeting does now adjourn at 8:16 p.m.

MOVED BY: Kathy Kedey

SECONDED BY: Claudine Burrell

CARRIED

Report respectfully submitted by:
Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

ACTION PLAN		
ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION
Vision Document: The Students' Vision for Education presentation to SEAC members.	Trustee Donna Edwards	By next SEAC meeting.
Parent Feedback Query: Accountability and Assessment	Superintendent Andrea McAuley	By next SEAC meeting.