

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, April 16, 2020 6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was held virtually on-line.

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
Chief of Speech Language & Hearing Services Lisa Drake
Chief of Psychological Services Steve Graffi
Special Education Officer Kyla McKee
Chief of Social Work & Attendance Services Carolyn Ussher

Recording Secretary: Diane Kent

1. Call to Order:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

2. Welcome Guests:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides welcomed special guests: Michelle Monk; Russ Davidson Secondary Representatives and Quincy James; Imran Syed Elementary Representatives.

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:

- Kathy Kedey, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

4. **Approval of Agenda:**

That the agenda for April 16, 2020 be approved.

MOVED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards SECONDED BY: Tara Culley

CARRIED

5. **Approval of the Minutes from February 20, 2020:**

That the minutes from February 20, 2020 be approved.

MOVED BY: Tara Culley SECONDED BY: Claudine Burrell

CARRIED

6. **Approval of the SEAC Meeting Dates for the 2020-2021 School Year:**

The list of dates for the 2020-2021 school year was reviewed by SEAC members and the meetings will continue to be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

MOTION:

THAT THE SEAC MEETING DATES FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR BE APPROVED

MOVED BY: Hanah Nguyen SECONDED BY: Trustee Christine Thatcher

CARRIED

7. **Inclusive Student Services Report: Student Programs and Services During COVID-19 Related School Closures:**

Special Education and Inclusive Student Services

Superintendent Andrea McAuley informed committee members that each of the Inclusive Student Services roles have shifted to the context of COVID-19 related closures and distance learning. These are embedded within a shift to all roles in the educator sector. Confirming the core opportunities of each role to support students and families while making the necessary pivots for this period of time.

DDSB Distance Learning Roles and Responsibilities

The “DDSB Distance Learning Roles and Responsibilities” document was also shared with SEAC members. The roles of the Inclusive Student Services integrated team (school level and district level) were highlighted in the critical service delivery commitments as staff work together to ensure supports and accommodations.

DDSB Donates Medical Supplies to Lakeridge Health

Durham District School Board (DDSB) has made a donation to help support Lakeridge Health’s efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Searching high and low across our 133 schools and learning centres, DDSB Facilities Services staff collected over 14,000 N95 masks, 141,000 pairs of gloves, 150 face shields, nearly 1,700 sets of goggles and other much-needed pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) items. After stockpiling the PPE at the DDSB Maintenance Centre, a grand total of eight skids of materials were transported to a donation depot in Whitby, set up by Lakeridge Health.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley also answered questions from committee members.

Thank you for your continued support of families and our Inclusive Student Services team.



Andrea - on behalf of the Inclusive Student Services Team



Support Families and Youth During COVID-19 Related School Closure

Chief Speech Language Pathologist Lisa Drake; Chief Psychologist Steve Graffi; Special Education Officer Kyla McKee; and Chief Social Worker Carolyn Ussher provided SEAC members with a PowerPoint presentation on "Supporting Distancing Learning". The presentation highlighted: supporting inclusive education; Inclusive Student Services clinical teams supporting students and educators during distance learning and COVID-19 Resource Tools for Families and Youth. They also answered questions from committee members.

Special Education Officer Kyla McKee informed committee members that the PowerPoint presentation will also be e-mailed to SEAC for their information.

8. Business Arising from the Minutes:

SEAC Chair Evan Kyriakides requested committee members to send open topic discussion ideas to her attention.

9. Reports:

Administration:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley

Transition Supports and IPRCs During COVID-19 Related School Closures

Superintendent Andrea McAuley will be participating in a teleconference tomorrow regarding the Ministry's guidelines for IEPs/IPRCs and moving both forward to capture the accommodations in Distance Learning.

Staff have been working on transition planning charts for students who turn 21 and ensuring a tangible transition plan is in place once they leave school; incoming families from Durham Health Pre-School Services and all in board transitions including Grade 8 to Grade 9. The focus was to have Distance Learning up and running. Communication and rollout for transition planning will mirror Distance Learning.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley also suggested to have Transition Planning during COVID-19 Related School Closures to be the focus item for the SEAC May agenda.

Board:

Trustee Donna Edwards informed committee members that the Board of Trustees received updates on COVID-19 School Closures; Use of Service Animals in School Policy; Student Dress Code Policy; Definitely Durham; and French as a Second Language (FSL) Review Consultation at the virtual Standing Committee meeting that was held on Monday, April 6, 2020.

10. Association Reports:

Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter

Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter are offering upcoming Ontario Autism Program (OAP) and Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) workshops and support for parents/caregivers. Also, to keep families, busy during this time of quarantine Autism Ontario-Durham Chapter have put together some craft kits for children 18 years and under. Further information regarding the workshops and craft kits can be found on the Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter Facebook page.

Easter Seals Ontario

Easter Seals Ontario is an essential service and still accepting applications during these challenging times; however, there may be a delay in response time.

Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region (LDADR)

The Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region (LDADR) will be hosting a virtual presentation on “Fostering Efficacious Kids” on Thursday, April 30th, 2020 from 7:10 to 8:30 p.m. Please email info@ldadr.on.ca and request the Zoom link.

11. Correspondence:

- Avon Maitland DSB
- Durham DSB
- Greater Essex County DSB

12. Community Concerns:

Craig Cameron Member At Large noted that there has been a lot of positive feedback around Distance Learning however there has also been some obstacles and assumptions regarding children and younger adults adapting to technology. He also mentioned that technology can be anxiety producing and overwhelming for some families.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley responded that educators are having conversations with students and families regarding technology needs and that the accommodation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is the core foundation to meet the needs of a student’s diverse learning.

Hanah Nguyen Easter Seals Ontario Representative noted that treatment centres have also closed due to COVID-19. Hanah asked if it was possible for families to have access to school based rehabilitation services; exercises; therapists or specialized equipment for families.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley responded that some school boards have Occupational Therapists/Physical Therapists (OT/PT) on staff, the DDSB’s OT/PT services are allocated to Grandview Children’s Centre. Andrea noted that she would follow up with Lorraine Sunstrum-Mann, Chief Executive Officer for Grandview Children’s Centre.

12. Community Concerns: (cont'd)

Carolyn McLennon Member At Large asked if data is currently being gathered on Distance Learning for future best practices.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley replied that it has been a great learning and service and will probably re-engage as a structure of good news stories. Educators were also surveyed on SPARK and the data will be provided to the Senior Team to review and distribute feedback.

Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair mentioned that the Zoom virtual meeting platform has an accommodation barrier to students with hearing impairments or hearing loss as it does not include closed captioning such as the Google Meets virtual platform. Eva also suggested that most high school students need a visual lesson and have been in a read only but perhaps a link could be sent to students to provide a visual as well as audio prior to the lesson.

Andrea McAuley responded that the accommodation of closed captioning within this virtual SEAC meeting has been captured on YouTube. Trustee Donna Edwards also noted that teachers are using a variety of virtual platforms such as Google Classrooms; D2L as well as Zoom.

13. Celebrations and Success:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides along with committee members wanted to celebrate the success on how well the DDSB has rolled out Distance Learning to students and families. Kudos to all staff on doing a great job – everyone has been phenomenal.

14. Next S.E.A.C. meeting – May 21, 2020.

15. Adjournment:

That the meeting does now adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

MOVED BY: Trustee Christine Thatcher

SECONDED BY: Rowin Jarvis

CARRIED

Report respectfully submitted by:
Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

Report Special Education Advisory Committee (cont'd)
 April 16, 2020

ACTION PLAN		
ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION
Send generating discussion topic ideas to SEAC Chair E. Kyriakides	SEAC Members	By next SEAC meeting.
Supporting Distance Learning PowerPoint Presentation e-mailed to SEAC members	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	Friday, April 17,2020
SEAC May Agenda Item: Transition Planning During COVID-19 Related School Closures	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	By next SEAC meeting.
Grandview Children Centre's services for families during COVID-19	Superintendent Andrea McAuley	By next SEAC meeting.