

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 17, 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 (left at 7:40 p.m.)
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 and Hearing Services Lisa Drake
Special Education Officer Kyla McKee

Recording Secretary: Diane Kent

1. Call to Order:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Welcome Guests:

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides welcomed special guest: Sade Gbalajobi, Transition Coordinator. Jackie Brown, Alternate for Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter was also in attendance.

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:

- Jack Barclay, Elementary School Administrator Representative
- Elizabeth Daniel, Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders
- Russ Davidson, Secondary School Administrator Representative
- Rowin Jarvis, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region
- Michelle Monk, Secondary School Administrator Representative
- Imran Syed, Elementary School Administrator Representative

Absent:

- Claudine Burrell, Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter

4. Approval of Agenda:

That the agenda for October 17, 2019 be amended to move Item 9). Staff Reports prior to Item 6). Inclusive Student Services Report.

MOVED BY: Trustee Christine Thatcher SECONDED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards

CARRIED

5. Approval of the Minutes from September 19, 2019:

That the minutes from September 19, 2019 be approved.

MOVED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards SECONDED BY: Kathy Kedey

CARRIED

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – October 2019:

Inclusive Student Services

Consultation with students and families is a key part of Individual Education Plan programming. Classroom educators draw on multiple sources of information to design the individualized programs for students who are exceptional learners. We continue to grow practices which involve student and family input on setting programming goals and strategies for a year's worth of learning and success. The Individual Education Plan comes to life as a working document as each student's learning plan is monitored and refined throughout the school year.

6. **Inclusive Student Services Report – October 2019: (cont'd)**

Initial assessment information has been shared with secondary students and elementary students will be receiving their progress reports next month. These are important check-in and collaboration times for reflecting on Individual Education Plans as an opportunity to refine programming commitments and initial student achievements with the 2019-2020 school year.



Special Education Class Program Brochures

A brochure is now available for each of the DDSB special education class programs that clearly outlines the program supports, outcomes, and additional details for the specific program. These resources augment the resource Many Paths to Success – Programs & Placements for Students with Special Education Needs which highlights the breadth of special education classes in the DDSB.

The program brochures are intended to provide clarity to families, community partners and staff about the program outcomes. All brochures can be found through this link: <https://www.ddsb.ca/en/programs-and-learning/inclusive-student-services.aspx>

October 2019 Team Highlight: Transition Coordinator

As one of the two lead Boards for a pilot project focusing on Integrated Transition Planning for Youth with Developmental Disabilities, the DDSB has received a third and final year of funding for a Transition Coordinator. In this role, Sade Gbalajobi is involved in:

- Attending transition meetings with school staff, parents, students, and community agencies.
- Developing and evaluating programs for staff and students educating parents, community stakeholders.
- Supporting PD, resources and tools for school teams.
- Providing direct student and family support through appropriate resources.

Responsibilities and accomplishments of the Transition Coordinator role include, but are not limited to:

Direct Student Services: The Transition Coordinator supported the students by facilitating opportunities in the community for work/ volunteer and study options. By organizing trips to various College programs for students with Developmental Disabilities ex. Durham College and Fleming College Cooperative Integration for Community Education (C.I.C.E) program. During these trips' students had the opportunity to visit college residences, tour campuses, connect with students currently enrolled in program, program graduates and speak with instructors/ program coordinators. The Transition Coordinator also assisted in exploring and recruiting community participation opportunities for student's skill development such as job shadowing, social skills/ life training.

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

Liaising with Community Partners: The Transition Coordinator is dedicated to contributing to other committees that integrate services across sectors, address barriers to services and build the communities capacities to respond to the DDSB's transitioning youth. Some of these committees have included:

- **DDSB Transition Advisory Group (TAG)** Comprised of over 15+ community partners the shared goal of this committee is to assist the DDSB and Community to build and refine programs. Share ideas and information such as updates on community resources and supports, employment opportunities and programs available for student throughout high school and into adulthood.
- **The Durham Integrated Transitional Planning Protocol Committee** directed by Community Living/ Oshawa Clarington.
- **Participation House Steering Committee** This committee is responsible for supporting the development of an employment readiness program that is creative, innovative and responds directly to individuals with disabilities who want to work. By providing direction to job seekers searching for meaningful employment and guiding employers in creating and sustaining an inclusive workplace culture.
- Some recent partnerships established with the DDSB have been with, **Uxbridge Creative Connections** a day program a program that supports our northern region students and **Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)**. The CCRW specializes in supporting individuals with disabilities seeking employment options in addition to providing summer opportunities in social skills via camps, job training programs and employment accommodations

Providing professional development for school staff – Through collaborating with team members the Transition Coordinator has organized transition planning PD sessions to SERTS/Department heads, Small class teachers and Inclusive Student Services team meetings (Social Work, Facilitators, & Psych Services) to build skills related to Integrated Transition Planning

Pathways of Students with Developmental Disabilities who Transitioned from DDSB in 2018-2019

First Step Post-Secondary	Number of Students
Community Pathway	24
Post-Secondary Education	4
Work/Paid Employment	11
Other	10
Total	49

Hearing Resource Services

On October 8th the Hearing Resource team attended Phonak Canada's Educator Day.

The focus for the morning revolved around the introduction of a new hearing instrument product line developed by Phonak, called Sky Marvel for pediatrics. Attendees were provided with an overview of its capabilities, and key features such as direct connectivity (to a variety of devices ex. Apple, Android) were highlighted.

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

Hearing Resource Services (cont'd)

The second portion of the day provided participants with important research around interrelated factors that contribute to an individual's decision to access hearing aid technology. Educators were informed about the impact of the social, emotional and cognitive components involved in that process.

The new product information and data from research shared with the Hearing Resource team will have a continued educational impact on the students staff support in schools.

Supporting Classroom Inclusion and Accessibility – Tips from the Vision Resource Services

The accessibility of text and images is important for all, including students who are visually impaired. Please encourage staff to create and display posters or charts in the classroom and halls that have enlarged, high contrast, clearly printed text and images. The classroom displayed information should be easily read by all students from their seat location.

Teacher text on boards or on chart paper should also be bold, enlarged and clearly printed; the use of unfaded, dark coloured markers is best. When presenting digital information to students, please also encourage teachers to present enlarged, high contrast (ex. yellow on dark blue) text and images. Use of large print, plain font styles, such as Tahoma, Arial, Verdana or Century Gothic are easier for all to read (digitally or in hand-outs) versus fancy font styles, such as Times New Roman. To support primary students, the font style Century Gothic has a print “a” versus a fancy script “a”, the print “4” can be created using the font style OCR A Extended, and the spacing between letters and words can be expanded to enhance readability (option within MS Word font menu advanced settings tab).

Teachers are encouraged to do regular, quick visual assessments of their student’s ability to discriminate text. The best practice is to point to random letters, numbers, and even pictures, and ask the student to tell you what they see. It is important that the teacher avoids asking the student if they can read or see the text, as words can be determined by the context and/or the first and last letters.

“INCLUSION IS NOT A STRATEGY TO HELP PEOPLE FIT INTO THE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES WHICH EXIST IN OUR SOCIETIES; IT IS ABOUT TRANSFORMING THOSE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES TO MAKE IT BETTER FOR EVERYONE. **INCLUSION IS ABOUT CREATING A BETTER WORLD FOR EVERYONE.**”
-DIANE RICHLER, PAST PRESIDENT, INCLUSION INTERNATIONAL

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

Psychological Services

Psychological Services staff began the school year by assisting schools in supporting the transitions of students with various and complex learning, developmental, social and behavioural needs, both within DDSB classrooms and in partnerships with our community service providers.

Most Psychological Services staff have spent time getting re-certified as BMS trainers; they will work toward supporting the revised model of staff training in non-violent crisis intervention.

Along with the latter, Psychological Services staff have set priorities in supporting system Capacity Building in suicide risk assessment, mental health first aid and violence/threat risk assessment. Staff also will be working to re-visit the DDSB document, Standards and Guidelines for the Use of Behavioural Procedures, by using the D2L format to update the 'essentials' of these guidelines for DDSB staff.

Psychological Services will take the lead and will be working within an integrated framework to formulate an Educator's *Guide to Understanding and Programming for Students with Learning Disabilities*, again using the D2L platform.

Psychological Services staff who provide services in high schools will be piloting a new structure of service provision, with key emphasis on accountability and attuned mental health supports.

Behaviour Management Systems Training

Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) is a fundamental training program offered to DDSB staff to assist in the use of consistent non-violent crisis intervention strategies when dealing with challenging behaviour. The program is based on a foundation in understanding our students (protective and risk factors) within a cycle of information gathering, planning, response and debrief/reflection. BMS helps frame behaviour intervention plans and is foundational to Behaviour Safety Plans.

BMS is key training for all staff working with students presenting risk of injury behaviours requiring strategic and planful responses to mitigate risk.

All training is facilitated by DDSB staff; Psychological Services team members and Administrators partner to lead both certification (full day) and recertification (half day) sessions.

For the 2019-2020 school year, aligned with other DSB training plans, our recertification cycle moved from an annual process to bi-annual face-to-face sessions. On the alternate year to recertification, staff members qualified in BMS will complete on online module. Trainers are always available to provide support to those embedding the principles of BMS within student programming. Effective Summer 2019, BMS became required training for all DDSB Administrators in addition to all permanent Educational Assistants. Training is open to all other employee groups involved in direct student programming.

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

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

Upcoming Learning Opportunities	
K-TEA* Training for New SERTs	October 10, 2019 October 22, 2019 November 6, 2019 November 22, 2019
Braille Music Introduction	October 11, 2019
PowerTPM - Ministry Reporting	October 17, 2019
Supporting Students in Elementary School Support Programs	October 21, 2019
Behaviour Management Basic Training	October 23, 2019 November 13, 2019 November 19, 2019 November 20, 2019
Behaviour Management System Refresher	November 5, 2019 November 12, 2019
Teachers of Gifted Learners Networking Session	November 19, 2019
Developmental Class Teacher Capacity Building – (Part 2 of 4 – Developmental Class Teacher Capacity Building)	November 20, 2019

*Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement

7. Presentation:

Integrated Transition Planning for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities - Draft Resource Consult with SEAC

Special Education Officer Kyla McKee provided SEAC members with an overview of the Ministry's Transition Pilot Project initiative. Kyla highlighted the coordinators' responsibilities and accomplishments which included: direct student service; liaising with community partners; providing professional development for school staff and parent outreach and engagement. She then introduced Sade Gbalajobi who provided committee members with a handout on the draft document DDSB Transition Road Map Journey to Post Secondary. Committee members were given the opportunity to review the document and provide feedback. They also answered questions from committee members.

8 a). Business Arising from the Minutes:

- Self-Advocacy Event - Update

SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides informed committee members that Rowin Jarvis has reached out to Jeff Hockey, Resource Consultant who is with the Ministry of Education and currently working with Sagonaska School. Jeff and his team provide a variety of workshops including self-advocacy. Currently waiting on speaker availability dates. Eva will e-mail Rowin regarding a confirmed date. This will enable SEAC to locate a secondary school facility to host the event.

8 b). Scheduled Discussion Period:

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

- Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)

Trustee Donna Edwards recently attended an Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) meeting provided an update on MACSE. Committee members turned and spoke to a partner on the role of MACSE. The following reflections were shared:

- Rotate MACSE SEAC representative (bring a local SEAC voice to the table; community concerns would be heard)
- Procedures; transparency/accountability needs to be in place for MACSE
- Minutes need to be timelier – no longer requesting for minutes – should automatically be sent to SEAC Chairs

Discussions took place among committee members and it was agreed upon to draft a letter to the Minister of Education regarding MACSE's involvement in special education.

9. Reports:

Administration:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley



Foundation of Report - PAaC on SEAC (October):

- *Develop process for review of special education plan*
- *Request update - EQAO results (deferrals, exemptions, participation rates, accommodations - provided for students with an IEP and their achievement levels*

Special Education Plans

Special Education Plans are posted annually on each board's website (June/July) concurrent to submission to the Ministry of Education. The content requirements for Special Education Plans are provided by the Ministry each spring and guide Board in updating the content of the plan. Included in the plan is a checklist of items that have been updated from the previous year's plan.

9. Reports: (cont'd)

Superintendent Andrea McAuley (cont'd)

In the DDSB, our plan is hyperlinked to assist parents/guardians and community partners in navigating the information easily.

Our goal is to continually refine the Special Education Plan to make it continually more user friendly for those seeking the information while maintaining compliance with the reporting requirements. SEAC feedback is an important part of this process. We ask that SEAC members consult with individual members of your organization and connect back with us before the new year on feedback on content and formatting. We will send each member a survey link to assist with compiling the feedback centrally. Prior to the commencement of revisions for 2020, we will bring the feedback to SEAC for consolidation.

EQAO Results - Durham District School Board Students

DDSB EQAO results were shared with the Board of Trustees during Standing Committee on October 7th. The report can be found on pgs.28-35 of the agenda package.

The report highlighted the results of EQAO assessments from the 2018-2019 school year including: Primary (Grades 1-3), Junior (Grades 4-6), Grade 9 Mathematics (Academic and Applied) and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).

The report highlights student achievement and provides analysis of the results for proportional outcomes. Specifically, achievement for students who are exceptional learners, students who are English Language Learners and achievement comparative of male/female students.

Achievement of Students with Special Education Needs Achieving at Provincial Standard

Assessment	Primary (Gr 1-3)	Junior (Gr 4-6)
Reading	52%	57%
Writing	48%	57%
Mathematics	29%	18%

Grade 9 Mathematics

Academic - 72%

Applied - 49%

OSSLT - 54% pass

Across the assessments - students with special education needs do represent the lower proportion of students meeting provincial expectation with the exception of Gr.6 Reading.

9. Reports: (cont'd)

Superintendent Andrea McAuley (cont'd)

Key for us is using this data to continually improve programming supports and strategies to for students, working in partnership across departments and in collaboration with school teams.

Supporting Students with Special Education Needs - 2019/2020 Responsive Action Plan

Using newly developed data tools, we are better able to understand the achievement trends of students of each exceptionality type. To grow the success of our students with special education needs, Inclusive Student Services working with school teams, will focus this year on supporting 1) students with Learning Disabilities and 2) students with Autism.

A focus on improving the achievement of our students with special education includes individual student planning, supporting educator professional learning and continuing to foster universal design in classroom programming.

- Helping schools distinguish between students with diagnosis of a Learning Disability and those identified through other forms of assessment. This is essential in mapping appropriate accommodations and/or supports.
- Creation of online (D2L) professional learning courses which help educators understand the profiles of learners with Learning Disabilities.
- Identification of communication developmental levels for students with ASD to provide effective strategies for enhancing/support communication growth with the classroom.

DDSB Graduation Rates

The DDSB Infographic "DDSB Graduation Rates Rise Above Provincial" was shared with SEAC members.

Mental Health Workers in Schools

The Ministry has recently announced that the pilot program "Mental Health Workers in Secondary Schools" will move to embedded funding (permanent roles rather than contract positions). We await further details and are excited to move forward with this support for students. The support is in place through partnership between Inclusive Student Services and Safe Schools/Well-Being.

Ontario Autism Program

The co-chairs of the OAP Advisory Committee recently released a statement that consultations have concluded and that the committee is refining recommendations. Information was posted through Autism Ontario.

We continue to look forward to updates on the plan and the anticipated positive impacts for families, our community partners and our shared work together supporting children and youth with Autism.

9. Reports: (cont'd)

Board:

Trustee Donna Edwards informed SEAC members that the Board of Trustees received presentations on: The Friend of Health Award; Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL); Leveraging Digital Update; Mental Health & Well Being Update and Trade Mission at the Standing Committee Meeting on Monday, October 7, 2019. Immediately following the Standing Committee Meeting a Special Board Meeting took place to review the 2019-2020 DDSB Budget – Compliance Adjustments and Re-Submission.

10. Association Reports:

VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

VOICE will be hosting a Fall Fun Fair on Sunday, October 27, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Warehouse Venue in Toronto. Tickets can be purchased at www.voicefordeafkids.com

11. Correspondence/Attachments:

- Letters from Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence
- Letter from Ecoles Catholiques Centre-Est
- Letter from Fragile X Canada

Letter from Fragile X Canada

Received a letter from the organization Fragile X Canada. Fragile X Canada has appointed Anagha Sumant to position of SEAC Representative and Chitra Patel as the Alternate Representative.

Discussions took place among committee members regarding if Fragile X had a local operating association. It was decided to defer Fragile X's membership letter to the November SEAC meeting. Superintendent Andrea McAuley will review the Education Act-Ontario Regulation 464/97 – SEAC laws with in-house counsel.

12. Questions and Comments:

Trustee Donna Edwards attended the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting as Trustee Alternate that was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at the Education Centre. Donna had put forth a suggestion for a SEAC member to become a member of the PIC committee. PIC members thought that was a good idea and will review their by-laws.

Tara Culley will be representing SEAC at the 2019 Fourth Annual Special Needs Information Fair for Durham Region. The fair will take place on Saturday, October 19, 2019 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Abilities Centre in Whitby.

13. Celebrations and Success:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley thanked CUPE Executive Negotiation members through the job action as the word “collective” shone through. CUPE honoured their members positions during the job action but still protected the health and safety of the students.

14. Next S.E.A.C. meeting – November 21, 2019 in Room 2020.

15. Adjournment:

That the meeting does now adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

MOVED BY: Trustee Christine Thatcher

SECONDED BY: Tara Culley

CARRIED

Report respectfully submitted by:
Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

ACTION PLAN		
ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION
E-mail R. Jarvis re: guest speaker availability dates.	SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides	October 21, 2019
Draft letter to Minister of Education re: MACSE	Trustee Donna Edwards	By next SEAC meeting.
SEAC Memberships – local associations – legal consult	Superintendent Andrea McAuley	By next SEAC meeting.