

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, December 19, 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

Recording Secretary: Carolyn Savage for Diane Kent

1. Call to Order:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. Welcome Guests:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley welcomed special guests: Imran Syed Elementary Representative and Russ Davidson Secondary Representative. Jackie Brown, Alternate for Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter was also in attendance.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley 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:

- Claudine Burrell, Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter
- Jack Barclay Elementary Representative
- Kathy Kedey, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children
- Craig Cameron, Member At Large

Absent:

- Christine Thatcher, Trustee

4. Approval of Agenda:

That the agenda for December 19, 2019 be approved.

MOVED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards

SECONDED BY: Tara Culley

CARRIED

4. a) Election of the Chair:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley informed committee members of the process of the SEAC Chair and Vice-Chair following the Ontario Education Act Regulations. Nominations were called for the position of Chair of SEAC.

Tara Culley nominated Eva Kyriakides for Chair of SEAC. Eva Kyriakides accepted the nomination.

Subsequent to additional calls for nominations by Superintendent Andrea McAuley, and there being none, nominations for the position of Chair were closed. Eva Kyriakides was acclaimed to the position of Chair of SEAC.

NOMINATION:

THAT EVA KYRIAKIDES REPRESENTS THE POSITION OF CHAIR OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

MOVED BY: Tara Culley

SECONDED BY: Rowin Jarvis

CARRIED

SEAC member Eva Kyriakides as the newly elected Chair assumed the chair and conducted the remainder of the meeting. Chair Eva Kyriakides thanked committee members for electing her to the position of Chair of SEAC.

4. b) Election of the Vice- Chair:

Consistently in the past, the Vice-Chair position has been held by a Trustee. As not all Trustees were present, the nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of SEAC has been deferred until February 2020.

5. Approval of the Minutes from November 21, 2019:

That the minutes from November 21, 2019 be approved.

MOVED BY: Trustee Donna Edwards SECONDED BY: Carolyn McLennon

CARRIED

6. Inclusive Student Services Report – December 2019:

Inclusive Student Services

Wishing each SEAC member and organization a wonderful upcoming holiday.

As the snow falls, our Inclusive Student Services leadership team has reflected on programming supports for students and the work of our teams this fall. We are proud of the depth & breadth of services provided to students with special education needs in the Durham District School Board and embrace the opportunity to work together to continue to strengthen our programs & services. This fall accomplishments of the team include, but are not limited to:

- Successful transition of special education programs and classrooms that moved over summer 2019 or opened in September 2019
- Initiated changes to our clinical supports in secondary schools
- Planned for the transition of School Based Rehabilitative Services (more information in this edition)
- Launched our Student Attendance data tools
- Revised our Service Animal procedure to align with the recently announced PPM163
- Facilitated a very successful Secondary to Post Secondary Transition Event
- Expanded community partnerships to welcome Addictions Counsellors from Pinewood Addiction Center – Lake Ridge Health
- Most importantly – supports and services to almost 15 000 students who are either formally identified as exceptional learners and/or receive support on a short-term basis

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

This year we are reminded of the importance of connection and self-care. Each of you are leaders in your organizations. Please remember to take some time for yourself at this time of year.



Andrea - on behalf of the Inclusive Student Services Team



Psychological Services

Psychological Services staff continue to fulfill their commitment to the Operational Goals of the DDBS and, therein, their five service functions of: assessment, consultation, direct service, crisis response and capacity building.

Staff have been active during November in supporting schools in their applications for Special Incidence Portion funding, an annual undertaking wherein funding applications are submitted to the Ministry of Education to support students with specialized and complex needs. Close to 100 applications were supported.

Numbers are being collected for the January start to screening for the Gifted program, which Psychological Services supports.

Social Work and Attendance Services

Social Work staff have had a very busy period as they continue to support students and families. With the holiday period upon us, our staff are doing extra duty ensuring that families who require extra help are connected to community agencies for gifts and food support over the next few weeks. In addition, staff are focusing on ensuring that students are connected with formal and informal supports over the holiday period.

Speech Language and Hearing Services

As the calendar year comes to a close, the speech-language and hearing teams are very active supporting students in schools.

The speech-language pathologists have shifted focus in kindergarten classrooms this year and are providing Tier 1 supports for oral language and early literacy. This team has been responding to the different priorities for communication and language support across all of the grades within schools.

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

In addition to student support, several working groups are actively gathering best practice research to guide clinical decisions and directions as we go forward. ASL interpreters and Deafblind intervenors continue to provide exceptional one-on-one student support within the system.

Our teams continue to be active in supporting the clinical education of their future colleagues as we are preparing to have students from the University of Toronto, George Brown College and Durham College working with the speech-language pathologists and intervenors in the new year.

Update: School Based Rehabilitation Services

On January 1st, Grandview officially becomes both service coordinator and provider of School Based Rehabilitation Services.

The following School Based Rehabilitation Services are provided through funded community partners:

- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Speech Language Therapy (speech production, fluency, voice difficulties differentiated service from DSB SLPs)

These services are provided to children and youth in a school setting. Previously, Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) services were previously provided by therapists employed by Community Advantage Rehabilitation (CAR) as funded through LHIN. We would like to thank Community Advantage Rehabilitation for the valuable partnership in service of students and families over many years. We also welcome the expanded partnership with Grandview Children's Centre and the commitment to collaboration demonstrated during the transition of these services. It is important to note that these service professionals (OT/PT) are key partners in the prescription and access to Specialized Equipment Allocation (SEA) for students with special education needs. Here are some key information points related to the transition of School Based Rehabilitation Services and Grandview Children's Centre:

Grandview Children's Centre

The transfer of School Based Rehabilitation Services to the scope of Grandview programs has added approximately 8,000 referrals to their existing demand of 10,000 clients per year. The team at Grandview is committed to efficiently and effectively considering all of the previous and future Grandview programs and services as one continuous pathway of service across the lifespan for the children, youth and families accessing Grandview and its programs, supports and partnerships.

Service Transition Planning

- Teams from Grandview and the six impacted school boards have been meeting regularly through the transition of services as a "SBRS Systems Leadership Team". This team includes senior team members (CEO of Grandview and Superintendents of Special Education/Inclusive Student Services), management (Clinical leaders – for example, Speech-Language Services) and Clinical Manager for Grandview.

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

- A separate transition team, of Management and front-line staff, meet regularly specific to the delivery of Speech Language Services.
- Grandview validated lists of students receiving services and those on waitlists for service with individual school teams through November 2019. This information was shared with the SBRS Systems Leadership Team on December 4th.
- During the transition, social media messaging is being utilized to communicate general changes. In addition, individual letters were sent to families, from Grandview, regarding transition of service for children receiving active service and for those waiting and a service navigation phone line is opened for families with questions.

Grandview Actions to Support Expansion of Scope of Service to Include School Based Rehabilitation Services

- Extending hours of operation across all 7 Grandview locations as scope of service expands.
- Formation of community therapy teams, based on geography of schools to be served, with intention of seamless support from pre-school to school-based service for families.
- Where possible provide consistency in therapists (to June 2020) for students, where therapists hired by Grandview have transitioned directly from supporting students in the boards covered by Grandview's service region.
- Advocacy and approval for one-time funding to take action between January and March 2020 to reduce the waitlist for service.
- Building in a timeline for learning and co-reflection within service model. Specifically, a commitment has been made to actively review service delivery and associated process following the initial implementation period (January – June 2020) to recalibrate where needed prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

Collaborative Actions to Support Transition of School Based Rehabilitation Services

Examples of collaborative actions to support transition of School Based Rehabilitation Services:

- Coordination of synchronous information to families and school teams.
- Commitment to consistency for students where possible.
- Examination of referrals processes to streamline steps for families and school teams.
- Collaboration on training of team members involved in service delivery. Specifically, DSBs collaborating on creation of onboarding resources to help Grandview staff orientate to service delivery in school environment; DDSB staff facilitated on December 19th (Inclusive Student Services and Health and Safety).
- Design of SEA coordination process and commitment to collaborate on alignment as much as possible (e.g., equipment recommendations and vendors).
- Provision and review of data, collaboratively and within each DSB, on quarterly basis for reflection on equity of access and to inform ongoing training.

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

DDSB Students Receiving or on Waitlist for Rehabilitation Services (as of December 4, 2019)

Therapy	On Service	On Waitlist
Occupational Therapy	836 students	1576 students
Physiotherapy	313 students	8 students
Speech Therapy (speech production, fluency, voice difficulties)	248 students	1077 students

Communication

- Information about the transition of School Based Rehabilitation Services was concurrently posted on the websites for Grandview Children's Centre and the six partnered DSBs on November 14, 2019.
- Metroland published information about the changes to this service delivery on November 20, 2019.
- Information has been shared through the DDSB website, Inclusive Student Services page, regarding the transition of School Based Rehabilitation Services. Following January as a transition time, this information will be replaced with information for families seeking to access support through this program (e.g., referral process).

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

Currently, there are ongoing labour negotiations with education unions across Ontario. "Work-To-Rule" actions means partial withdrawal of services.

At this time, both the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and Ontario Secondary Schools Teacher Federation (OSSTF) are currently in "Work to Rule" which means a partial withdrawal of services. System level professional development is currently on hold as a result.

The focus on students continues as does individual student programming supports including job embedded, individualized coaching & support.

DDSB Special Education Parent/Guardian Guide

The electronic copy of the DDSB Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education will be sent to committee members; as the window is being extended for SEAC to provide additional feedback/comments.

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

Social Media Highlights – Connections and Supports



Inclusive Student Services Durham DSB @SpecEdDDSB · Dec 9

"Carving Your Own Path" - an event highlighting supports in postsecondary for youth with learning disabilities. Pls see flier for Jan 22 event details. Thanks @LDA_Durham & @DurhamCatholic



Andrea McAuley @McAuley_Andrea

Save the Date: Considerations for PostSecondary for Students with Learning Disabilities. January 22nd at 6pm. Location: Notre Dame CSS. Many thanks @LDA_Durham @DurhamCatholic



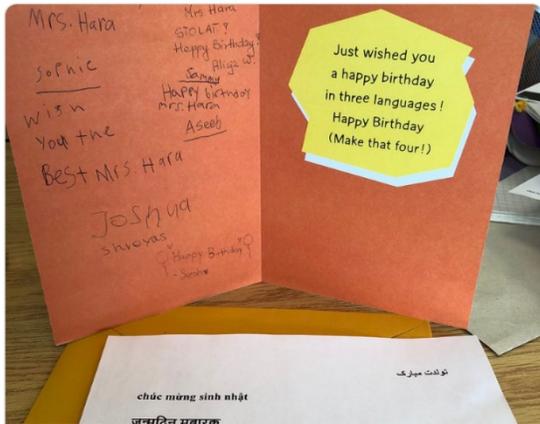
Mr. Kreider @MrKreiderAT · Dec 6

The technology training session with the @JohnDrydenPS grade 3 student (and mother) went so well today, he invited me to his birthday party. Alas, he forgot to check with his Mom first. @SpecEdDDSB



Richardson Spec Ed @JCR_SpecEd · Dec 6

Ms Hardaker's PLP class celebrated a birthday 🎂 today in class and students learned how to write "Happy Birthday" 🎉 in 7 different languages! #CRRP #happybirthday #DDSB #equity @equity_DDSB @DurhamDSB @SafeSchoolsDDSB @SpecEdDDSB



Becky Kuruliak @beckykuruliak · Nov 25

DDSB Educational Assistants (45) excited to receive their professional device after completing their 5 online courses! @DDSB_EdTechs @SpecEdDDSB @MrsTArmstrong1



7. **Presentation:**

There was no presentation at this time.

8 a). **Business Arising from the Minutes:**

- Self-Advocacy Event – Update

In light of the current job action, the Self Advocacy Event will be postponed to a later date.

8 b). Scheduled Discussion Period:

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

- DDSB Dress Code Consultation

Committee members paired and shared suggestions regarding the DDSB Dress Code. SEAC members shared some of their reflections:

- Need to be sure to listen to student voice
- Be culturally aware and gender bias aware
- Address dress code issues in private and respectfully with student
- Some kids, due to anxiety, feel better with their hood up – awareness of this
- What is the “board wide” policy? It was noted that the policy is in the front of elementary agenda.
- Depending on the area, the dress code conversations can vary – there is a balance to be found depending on the community
- The example of ‘spaghetti straps’ is different from JK to a Grade 8
- If uniforms are considered, we have to ensure the physical & sensory needs of students with special educational needs are considered
- Important to gain the input of student trustees
- Understanding of how progressive discipline would work for breach of dress code
- Question around “annual” review however parent votes can only happen every two years?
- Approved vendors – who gets to consult on this. Be sure to seek input from Inclusive Student Services.

9. Reports:

Administration:

Superintendent Andrea McAuley

Job Action

Members of the Elementary Teachers Federations of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation are currently in job action with a removal of services in place (currently: Phase 2/ETFO, Phase 1/OSSTF).

In the DDSB, ETFO represents both elementary teachers and Early Childhood Educators. OSSTF represents secondary teachers as well as Professional Support Services Personnel (PSSP). The PSSP group includes our clinical teams of Speech Language, Psychological Services and Social Work. The group also represents our Child and Youth Work, Interpreters and Intervenors.

OSSTF has also engaged three days of a full removal of services (one full provincial, two with a number of Boards impacted). Specific to SEAC, eleven elementary students are individually supported by Intervenors or Interpreters. We'd like to thank the families of these students and their school administrators for the collaboration to ensure program access on the day, to date, of withdrawal of OSSTF member service due to strike action.

9. Reports: (cont'd)

Superintendent Andrea McAuley (cont'd)

SIP Claims

With many thanks to the team, in schools and centrally, the DDSB has submitted 100 SIP claims for Ministry consideration. Thank you to Dr. Steve Graffi, Dr. Sara Schleien, Susan Courville and Jennifer Durning for leading the process this fall.

Transition to Kindergarten - Supporting Families with Children Receiving in Home Infant and Preschool Services

Infant and Child Development (ICD) within the Health Department is now the main provider of in-home support for families with children with complex needs prior to transition to child care or school. To ensure a family-friendly, thorough transition process, a collaborative team between ICD and DDSB met on November 26 to review and revise transition process and tools.

Supporting Grade Eight to Grade Nine Transition

Routinely, the Inclusive Student Services and Student Success teams host an evening in early January specific to supporting families with information about the transition from Grade Eight to Grade Nine specific to students with special needs.

This year, to reach more families and provide the information in a format which can be accessed when needed and reviewed, we are moving to an electronic format. More information will be shared with SEAC members as the links and content are distributed to the community.

Service/Guide Dog - Procedure Update

DDSB Service/Guide Dog Procedure revised for alignment with PPM 163 School Board Policies on Service Animals.

Key updates at this time, to align with PPM 163, to DDSB Procedure for Service Animals:

- Definitions moved from Appendix to embedded within procedure
- Inclusion of key responsibilities by role
- Clarification of request for accommodation for employees and, separately, school volunteers
- Addition of 'visiting support animals'
- Specifics to record keeping and data tracking
- Applications for Use of Guide Dog/Service Dog and Service Animal updated
- Administrators' checklist revised
- Update to the sample letters

9. Reports: (cont'd)

Superintendent Andrea McAuley (cont'd)

For reference/contained within the revised procedure:

Service Animal incl. Guide Dog	Support Animal	Visiting Animal
Use of a service animal or guide dog requires that both the animal and the student handler must be certified as having been successfully trained by an accredited training facility.	Use of an animal for emotional support. Important to note that these are animals who are not trained to provide specific supports.	An animal from a service or community group providing support to a group of students, or individual students, to foster inclusion but not as accommodation requirement. e.g., St. John's Ambulance Therapy Dogs

The PPM requires collection of data at the system level. DDSB is developing a tool internally, with thanks to our PowerTPM team, to include this within our Special Education data tool.

Required data collection:

- Total number of requests for students to be accompanied by service animals;
- Whether the requests are for elementary or secondary students;
- The number of requests approved or denied.
- If denied, the rationale for the decision, including a description of other supports and/or services provided to the student to support their access to education;
- Species of service animals requested and approved;
- Types of needs being supported (e.g., medical, physical, emotional).

Board:

Trustee Donna Edwards informed SEAC members that the Board of Trustees held its annual internal elections for Chair, Vice-Chair, Vice-Chair of Standing Committee and committee representatives at the Standing Committee Meeting on Monday, December 2, 2019. Pickering Trustee Chris Braney was elected as Chair of the Durham District School Board.

Whitby Trustee Niki Lundquist was elected Vice-Chair. Whitby Trustee Christine Thatcher was elected as the Vice-Chair of Standing Committee. Oshawa Trustee Darlene Forbes was elected Chair of Education Finance.

Ajax Trustee Donna Edwards and Whitby Trustee Christine Thatcher were elected as Liaison Trustees for SEAC. Oshawa Trustee Ashley Noble and Whitby Trustee Niki Lundquist were elected as Liaison Trustee Alternates.

10. Association Reports:

There were no association reports at this time.

11. Correspondence/Attachments:

Letter from Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders (OAFCCD)

Received a letter from the association, Katie Harkot has stepped down from her position as SEAC Alternate. Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders has nominated Kelly Kennedy to the position of Alternate.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT KELLY KENNEDY WILL BE THE SEAC ALTERNATE FOR THE ONTARIO ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH COMMUNICATION DISORDERS.

MOVED BY: Tara Culley

SECONDED BY: Carolyn McLennon

CARRIED

12. Questions and Comments:

Tara Culley noted that she is receiving many questions and concerns from the parent community regarding the Autism funding.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley noted that the DDSB has received Ministry funding in the amount of \$66,150 to provide Autism course opportunities to build capacity across the system.

Hanah Nguyen informed committee members that PAAC on SEAC is distributing a survey to look at SEAC membership, practices and training needs. Surveys should be submitted by January 31, 2020. Hanah noted that she will forward the link to Diane Kent for distribution.

Trustee Donna Edwards informed committee members about Advocacy Day. An OPSBA public education survey was sent to 1,000 Ontarians asking whether you would rather reduce the deficit or put funds into special education. Over 80% voted in favour of special education. Donna noted that she will forward the link to Diane Kent for distribution.

Eva Kyriakides asked if students who are in the Gifted program in the North are being part of the transition.

Superintendent Andrea McAuley indicated that it was being addressed by the administration at the school.

13. Celebrations and Success:

Tara Culley shared that her son Adam attended the transition night to secondary school, and he was very happy.

Hanah Nguyen gave kudos to the Durham Region Police Children’s Games for providing a fun and inclusive sporting event and the Toronto Rotary Club for hosting an amazing Christmas Party.

Trustee Donna Edwards mentioned that her daughter Victoria had a very successful role in the Polar Express play.

Eva Kyriakides noted that three staff members from her work as part of the Inclusive and Accessibility committee meeting shared stories relating to inclusiveness and accessibility. Eva also shared her new favourite socks “Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities.”

14. Next S.E.A.C. meeting – January 23, 2020 in Room 2020.

15. Adjournment:

That the meeting does now adjourn at 8:11 p.m.

MOVED BY: Tara Culley

SECONDED BY: Hanah Nguyen

CARRIED

Report respectfully submitted by:
 Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

ACTION PLAN		
ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION
E-mail electronic version of “DRAFT” Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Education to SEAC.	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	January 7, 2020.
PAAC on SEAC Survey Link distributed to SEAC.	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	December 20, 2019
OPSBA Public Education Survey Link distributed to SEAC.	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	January 9, 2020
Defer election of SEAC Vice-Chair to February meeting.	Administrative Assistant Diane Kent	February 20, 2020