

LAMBTON-KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
~ Thursday, March 26, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m. Via Videoconference ~

| Present: | Rose Gallaway - St. Clair Child and Youth Services (Chair) Elizabeth Hudie – Trustee (Vice-Chair) Candace Service, Epilepsy Support Centre – Sarnia Branch Jack Fletcher - Trustee Jerry Knight – Lambton County Developmental Services Eva Lizotte – Community Living, Wallaceburg Janet Vanderwerf – VIEWS for Children Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision Julia MacKellar – Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent Susan Mitchell – Member “at large” Gordon Crompton – Community Living, Chatham-Kent Lori Turner – Autism Ontario, Chatham-Kent Jennifer Gillespie – Member “at large” | |
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| Regrets: | Pam Graham, System Coordinator of Special Education Chris King – Community Living, Sarnia-Lambton Jean MacIntyre – Member “at large” George Melendy – Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County | |
| Resource Staff: | Dave Doey, Superintendent of Education Shelley Martsch-Litt, Special Education Coordinator Bruce Davidson, Special Education Coordinator (Secondary) Lori Gall, Recording Secretary | |
| Guests: | Julie Kingma, Epilepsy Support Centre | |
| Agenda Item | Details/Discussion | Action Items |
| Call to Order and Approval of Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rose called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the Agenda Dave asked to add “Attendance at the 2015 SEAC Conference” to the Agenda Elizabeth moved, Janet seconded “That the Agenda be approved, as amended”; All in favour | |
| Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Norma moved, Julia seconded “That the Minutes of February 19, 2015 be approved”; All in favour | |
| Business Arising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was no business arising from the Minutes | |
| Opportunities for Inclusion of Students in Self-Contained Classes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gord Crompton asked about opportunities for students in self-contained classes to interact with other students in the school Shelley said that there are many opportunities for students in self-contained classes to interact with others, including things such as physical education, art, and even, in some instances, the regular classroom; Tecumseh’s ALLP program students have lunch with other students each day; it was noted that there is a mutual admiration and respect between students in regular and special classes Bruce is responsible for secondary schools; he said, there, special class students are involved in every general school activity, and can participate in Phys. Ed. and co-op placements, and they can audit regular classes, such as foods, if there is EA support; he concurred with Shelley’s earlier comment, saying that the special class students are recognized and tremendously valued Dave said that, through efforts to raise awareness of equity and inclusivity, the capability of learners is a focus, with the need to respect and value each individuals’ gifts at the core of the training Eva asked for more information about students that do co-op placements; Bruce said students doing in-school placements can be asked to take attendance sheets to the office, work in the cafeteria, and/or assist the custodians; Bruce noted that the students get the same training as other co-op students; he said they must understand all of the information delivered (i.e. safety, etc.) before they are able to work at a co-op placement outside of the school | |

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| Opportunities for Inclusion of Students in Self-Contained Classes (continued) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that students who are in the regular co-op class – that may have an interest in going into nursing or some other type of occupation that would ultimately work with special populations – are sometimes placed within a self-contained class | |
| Presentation: Review of the Ministry's SEAC Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelley provided an overview the Special Education portion of the Ministry of Education's website (www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html) She noted the 'Introduction to Special Education Advisory Committees' and why they exist, as well as the links to information on the IPRC process, etc. She showed members where to find information on orientation and training, as well as frequently asked questions and answers, and valuable links and resources As the conclusion of the presentation, Jack advised SEAC members that there is a good Twitter account hosted by Ontario Special Needs, in case anyone is interested | |
| Support Allocation Process Information 2015 - 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave said the Lambton-Kent District School Board received information on budget allotments for next year and, while the Ministry is saying that funding will be 'stable', they are holding money back for school allocation processes The Board is preparing for a 1 – 2% reduction in funding due to declining enrolments and smaller classroom sizes; the Board gets a set amount to fund EAs; Dave said while we won't be able to hire more EAs, hopefully, we don't have to cut any Each year the Special Education Coordinators sit down with Principals to review their school's needs.; then the Special Education Team meets to prioritize the needs of students across the Board This year they are modifying the process to involve a Principal Rep. from each of the five families of schools, and the Superintendents; this allows them to see what is involved with making the decisions, and, to ensure they can talk to parents with first-hand knowledge about how and why the decisions were made Eva asked if there is contingency held back?; Dave said there isn't a hold-back, as all resources are required to support the students; however, a couple of weeks into the school year, because of student movement, etc., there is a shuffle of resources He said that if there are students who didn't come to our attention through an agency, and/or who are new to us, the student is supported by our Itinerant teams Jack asked if our Board's budget is based on the total number of students?; his concern is that while enrolment is declining and funds will be cut, the number of special needs students is increasing Dave said that on top of the 'Per Pupil Funding', there is a 'Needs Amount' provided; he noted that there will a 4-year phase-in of these funds; this is not new money, it's just funds that are being re-allocated; as well, he said there are additional funds available to supply students with technology, if needed Jack asked if it was safe to say that we aren't happy with the process for funding special education?; Dave cited Dr. Douglas Willms' findings on funding (http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/1516/2015SB05EN.pdf) which indicates that, based on postal codes, they can identify the likelihood that there will be students with special needs; Dave will share the information with Jack | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave |
| Special Education Report Amendments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruce explained that Sections 2.8, 2.9 and 2.13 are unchanged The amendments to Section 2.10 and Section 2.11 were noted; in both instances, the prior year information was presented alongside the current information so that it makes for an easy comparison; there were no questions Jennifer asked how many psychological assessments are done in a year?; we will bring that information forward A question was asked as to whether there is a wait list for an assessment?; it was noted that in instances where there is a need to do an assessment, they look at what supports can be put into place in the meantime; Dave spoke about the 'Steps to Success' process, with supports that are available along the way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spec. Ed. Team |

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| Accessibility of Special Education Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave spoke about the need for Board-related documents to be accessible online and showed a revised version of the Special Education Report that is being developed for the Board's website by the Board's Web Technologist, Jenn Scuzs, with Lori Gall's help; the new version will ensure the Special Education Report is easier to search and is more accessible Lori said the information shared tonight is still in a <i>beta version</i>, but the Report (in its new format) will be put on the Board's website as soon as it's complete | |
| Parent Involvement Committee Event: Raising Resilient Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave said that Parent Involvement Committee is hosting an interactive presentation on Raising Resilient Children on April 15th from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Lambton-Kent Composite School; the guest speaker comes highly recommended; everyone is welcome to attend | |
| Correspondence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspondence was received from the Grand Erie District School Board citing concerns about Regulation 274 and the Ministry's hiring practices for teachers A letter was sent from the Thames Valley District School Board, it too was with regard to concerns about Regulation 274 Elizabeth feels SEAC should add its voice, by sending a letter to the Ministry of Education; Jack agrees, and feels it could impact our special needs students because the legislation could impede hiring the right person for the job; Dave said the timing to comment would be right because the government has said they may reconsider the legislation; everyone agreed that a letter will be prepared; Dave said a letter will be brought back to the Committee next month | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave |
| SEAC Conference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave noted that the individuals who had expressed interest in attending the Conference, in addition to himself, are: Eva, Jack, Elizabeth, and Jennifer Details regarding the change of venue for the conference were shared with those SEAC members planning to represent the LKDSB | |
| Associated Reports, Other Business and Sharing of Best Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Julia asked about the Special Needs Strategy; Dave said we are partnering with agencies in both the North and South; this strategy relates to the information Pam Graham presented at the last SEAC Meeting; Dave noted that planning has been underway through the school year, with one report due in the Spring and another due in the Fall; he said that available information will be shared at SEAC's May meeting Julia also asked about the Adult Education Strategy; Dave said if the group would like, he could ask Jim Morton of the Board's Adult Education Centre to make a presentation; it was agreed that we should invite Jim to a future meeting Gord said their organization is celebrating their 60th Anniversary this year and, as a part of that, they will be hosting a Gala on May 2nd Bruce said that we are pressing on with the IEP Writer training; after the IEP Writer training was done a Meeting Management Module and a Report Writer Module were implemented Bruce said that he and his counterpart at the St. Clair Catholic District School Board are working on having someone who is an ODSP user advocate on behalf of the program; a presentation will be done at each of the Board Offices: April 22nd in Wallaceburg, April 27th in Sarnia, and April 29th in Chatham Lori Turner said that April 2nd is World Autism Awareness Day and they'll be having a "Raise the Flag" campaign; she noted that 8 schools will be raising flags in support of their clients, in addition to those that participated in past years Lori Turner advised SEAC members that scholarships are available for: students with ASD; who have a sibling with ASD; or, who have a parent with ASD; it was suggested that anyone interested could contact the Autism Society for more details Candace said they celebrated 'Purple Day' today, in support of Epilepsy; there was approximately \$500 raised in support of the organization, and, approximately 300 people benefited from a presentation that was made | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dave/Pam |

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| Associated Reports, Other Business and Sharing of Best Practices (continued) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelley said that south school Pre-School Intake has been completed, with the intake for the north schools still pending Rose said that on May 6th St. Clair Child & Youth, Sarnia-Lambton will be taking part in "McHappy Day" at McDonald's | |
| Questions from the Public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no questions | |
| Future Agenda Items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If anyone would like to make a presentation regarding their agency, provide the information to Lori Gall Julia said that she could make a presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lori |
| Next Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 26, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Wallaceburg District Secondary School, Room 141 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All |
| Adjournment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. | |