

LAMBTON-KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

~ Thursday, October 20, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m. at Wallaceburg District Secondary School ~

Present:	Rose Gallaway - St. Clair Child and Youth Services (Chair) Elizabeth Hudie – Trustee (Vice Chair) Gordon Crompton – Community Living, Chatham-Kent Kayla Murphy for Eva Lizotte – Community Living, Wallaceburg Anika Altiman – First Nation Representative Jennifer Gillespie – Member “at large” Jerry Knight – Lambton County Developmental Services Janet Vanderwerf – VIEWS for Children Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision Julia MacKellar – Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent Norma Hills for Chris King – Community Living, Sarnia-Lambton Jack Fletcher - Trustee Susan Mitchell – Member “at large”	
Regrets:	Pam Graham, System Coordinator of Special Education Jen Scheuneman – Autism Ontario, Chatham-Kent and Sarnia Lambton Chapters Tabitha Vercillo, Epilepsy Support Centre George Melendy – Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County Jean McIntyre – Member “at large”	
Resource Staff:	Dave Doey, Superintendent of Education Elsa Natvik, Lambton-Kent Secondary Administrators’ Association Liz Zantingh, Special Education Coordinator Lisa Valade, Special Education Coordinator (Secondary) Lori Gall, Recording Secretary	
Agenda Item	Details/Discussion	Action Items
Call to Order and Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rose called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and, since there were some new members around the table, she asked everyone to introduce themselves</li> <li>• New/alternate SEAC members:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anika Altiman has replaced Christy Bressette as the First Nation representative</li> <li>• Kayla Murphy is representing Community Living Wallaceburg as their organization’s alternate member</li> <li>• Rose noted that Tabitha Vercillo has replaced Kylie White as the Epilepsy Support Centre’s representative, unfortunately, Tabitha was unable to attend the October meeting</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Janet Moved, Elizabeth Seconded “<i>That the Agenda be approved</i>”; All in favour</li> </ul>	
Approval of Minutes of June 16, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jack Moved, Julia Seconded “<i>That the Minutes of September 15, 2016 be approved</i>”; All in favour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lori</li> </ul>
Business Arising from Minutes	<p><u>Student Suspension Information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dave reviewed statistics regarding 2015-2016 student suspensions, by exceptionality, that provided more context than the overview presented at the last meeting                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One example highlighted was a student who was suspended 4 times; Dave said the number of suspensions suggests that there may be gap in the supports provided; so, the situation should be explored to see if there are additional mechanisms that can be put in place to allow this student to exhibit appropriate behaviour and be successful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dave spoke about the ‘mitigating factors’ that Principals are required to consider before issuing a suspension; one factor is ‘Does the child have the understanding that their behaviour is inappropriate?’; if the answer is ‘No’, then the suspension provides no learning or opportunity for correction or change</li> <li>• Dave tells the Principals of the schools he oversees that suspension is a tool, but it should be the last tool that is used</li> </ul>	

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Business Arising from Minutes (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of suspensions last year was <i>slightly</i> lower than the year before and that was <i>slightly</i> lower than the year before that, but it appears a plateau has been reached</li> <li>• As Dave mentioned previously, a Ministry document providing new ideas on ways to support students and keep them in school (through focusing on appropriate responses to inappropriate behaviour exhibited by special needs students), will be reviewed with Principals</li> </ul>	
	<p><u>Letter re: Ontario Autism Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rose drew the members attention to a letter that was drafted on behalf of SEAC and directed to the Minister of Children &amp; Youth Services, with a copy to the Minister of Education; there were no requests for changes, so it will be mailed out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lori</li> </ul>
	<p><u>Accessibility Report Details</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dave noted that, at the last meeting, Chris King had asked about the tracking mechanisms in place for the accessibility work that needs to take place, he drew the members attention to the following sections of the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Page 9, Section 6.2 “Other” refers to the removal of barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dave noted that we have had 35 new Arabic-speaking students that are being supported by Adult Language and Learning in Chatham, and Newcomer Services in Sarnia</li> <li>▪ Tilbury Area is one of the most diverse schools in the system and has mechanisms in place to support those whose first language is something other than English</li> <li>▪ When necessary, we liaise with community service providers, when needed, to obtain services and remove barriers</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Page 9, Section 6.3 “Other” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dave said that we purchased 135 FM systems for students, 740 laptops, 32 Chrome books, and 380 iPads in order to support student’s needs</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Dave said once the most recent EQAO data has been pulled together, there will be a full report brought to SEAC, but summarized that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grade 3 – 382 special needs students wrote the test with 342 of those students using assistive technology; he said there may have been other accommodations in place too, such as a scribe</li> <li>▪ Grade 6 – 463 students wrote; of that, 355 made use of technology</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• The EQAO is an extension of the regular classroom work now, so the technology is not introduced at test time but, instead, is something they’re familiar with</li> <li>• There was discussion about the system-wide challenges of the Grade 10 EQAO testing that took place today; it was noted that students are used to ‘technology’ in the form of predictive typing and feel that, when they aren’t able to use it, their work might suffer</li> <li>• Liz noted that the Assistive Technology Team has been busy supporting the secondary students</li> <li>• It was noted that scribes are appreciated not just for the fact that they’re offering that service, in particular, but just because “they’re there” with the student</li> <li>• The group discussed the positive changes that have taken place because of technology, most notably, students that require technology are not being singled out as being ‘different’</li> <li>• It was noted that, after Grade 9, students prefer a Chrome book or a laptop to an iPad because of the type of work that they’re doing</li> <li>• Jerry feels that it goes full circle though, because he prefers to use an iPad in his work as a laptop’s not as portable, so it’s good that students are introduced to all of these tools</li> </ul>	

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Special Education Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Special Education Department Responsibilities for 2016-2017 as well as the list of Coordinator Schools were shared with the membership</li> <li>Liz provided an overview of the portfolios that each of the Coordinators maintain</li> </ul>	
Summary of 2016-2017 Priority-Setting Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dave highlighted the takeaways from the Priority-Setting session and cited some of the presentations that are being planned for the 2016-2017 school year</li> <li>He reminded the members that while the number of students with special needs continues to grow, the dollars to support them are decreasing</li> <li>Members are encouraged to review the list when it is sent out and provide feedback if they feel there should be any changes</li> </ul>	
Correspondence	<p><u>Letter from Renfrew County Catholic District School Board re: PPM 156</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The members discussed students with disabilities not being hired but felt it is difficult to determine why that is, as there are other factors such as: the unemployment rate; whether the person actually wants to be employed, etc.</li> <li>Jerry said that working to help motivate these students is important</li> <li>Rose said schools are working hard to ensure students get a diploma or a certificate, and are helping with transitions, and this is helping to ensure that more students are going on to post-secondary education</li> <li>Jack feels that a barrier was put in place by post-secondary institutions because they want new testing to be done for each student;</li> <li>Elizabeth said organizations such as Community Living are helping to provide experience for students</li> <li>Jack believes that it is encouraging to think that the increased use of technology may cause a positive shift</li> <li>Elsa said that Co-op education also provides employability skills and this allows employers to be prepared to work with students with special needs</li> </ul> <p><u>Letter from the PaAC on SEAC Regarding New Training Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The letter cites the new training resources that are available to SEAC members</li> <li>Jack said he's checked out the Modules and found them very informative and encourages the members to check them out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>
Association Reports, Other Business and Sharing of Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jack said that they're very busy with the Accommodation Review Committees again; it's a difficult task that has an impact on communities involved; Elizabeth said they are getting lots of feedback</li> <li>Julia reported that their Social Skills group started up again yesterday, and their Friends Program started too</li> <li>Norma cited the Summer Employment Program information and shared a 'Thank You' to Rosedale for the use of the school for their summer program</li> <li>Dave announced that he will be retiring as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, with the intention of continuing his involvement in education in different ways</li> <li>Rose spoke on behalf of SEAC, telling Dave that he will be missed but wishing him all the best as he heads into the next chapter in his life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thursday, November 17, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m., W.D.S.S., Library Learning Commons Space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.</li> </ul>	