

LAMBTON-KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
~ Thursday, February 17, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. via MS Teams~

| Present: | Chris King – Community Living, Sarnia-Lambton (Chair) Janet Barnes – Trustee (Vice-Chair) Melani Rich – Autism Ontario, Chatham-Kent and Sarnia Lambton Chapters Steve Stokley – Community Living, Chatham-Kent Wendy Smith – Community Living, Wallaceburg Vicki Ware – Indigenous Representative Julia MacKellar – Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent Jean MacIntyre – “Member At Large” Lori Marvin – St. Clair Child & Youth Services | |
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| Regrets: | Derek Robertson – Trustee Taryn Lessard, Lambton-Kent Elementary Administrators’ Association | |
| Resource Staff: | Angie Barrese, Superintendent of Education Sandra Perkins, System Coordinator of Special Education Chris Moore, System Coordinator of Multidisciplinary Teams Jeff Brosh, Special Education Coordinator Sheila Richardson, Special Education Coordinator Heather Touzin, Special Education Coordinator - Secondary Tara Mitchell, Special Education Coordinator Marty Passmore, Lambton-Kent Secondary Administrators’ Association Lori Gall, Recording Secretary | |
| Guest(s): | Laura Stokley, Manager, Community Living Sarnia-Lambton Evan Dawe, Coordinator of Employment Services, Community Living Sarnia-Lambton Mackenzie Horner, LKDSB Teacher, Transitions II Program Elisabeth Hoskins, LKDSB Attendance Officer | |
| Agenda Item | Details/Discussion | Action Items |
| Call to Order and Approval of Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris King called the meeting to order Wendy Smith Moved, Jean MacIntyre Seconded “<i>That February 17, 2022 Agenda be approved.</i>”; All in favour | |
| Territorial Acknowledgement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee Barnes recited the Traditional Territorial Acknowledgment | |
| Approval of Minutes of January 20, 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Julia McKellar Moved, Jean MacIntyre Seconded “<i>That the Minutes of the January 20, 2022 Special Education Advisory Committee be approved.</i>”; All in favour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lori Gall |
| Business Arising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was no business arising from the Minutes of January 20, 2022 | |
| Presentation – <i>Summer Employment Transitions Program and JobPath Program</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heather Touzin introduced Laura Stokley, Manager of Community Living Sarnia-Lambton, and Evan Dawe, the agency’s Coordinator of Employment Supports, to share information about their Summer Employment Transitions (SET) Program, and JobPath Program Evan Dawe began by stating their SET Program received an award from the United Nations in recognition of their innovative approach to helping youth with a disability find summer employment He noted that this year’s SET Program will run from July 4 – August 19 and is open to individuals between the ages of 16 and 29 who have a self-declared disability Students are hired as ‘Summer Job Coaches’ then as peer role models they help individuals in the program find a summer job, provide on-the-job training, and assist with making workplace adjustments and/or providing job aids Evan highlighted that these are actual paying jobs; those interested should visit their website for more information; applications are due May 20, 2022 He said there are a finite number of positions available each year, so participation is limited; last year they had 10 Job Coaches and 30 program participants This program is often a pre-cursor to individuals participating in the JobPath Program | |

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| <p>Presentation – <i>Summer Employment Transitions Program and JobPath Program</i> (continued)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Stokley said the JobPath Program is a 6-week workshop that helps individuals with a disability find a permanent, competitive job: in-class adult-centred lessons, workshops, field trips and volunteer opportunities help to prepare participants for employment • Laura said individuals with a disability or barrier to employment who are: finished school, enrolled in the Ontario Disability Support Program, motivated to work, and who are competitively employable are those that are considered for the program • Individuals interested in taking part in the program can go to https://www.employment-transitions.com/ for more information • The next three available sessions begin: May 9, July 25, and October 11, 2022 • Jean MacIntyre asked who pays the Job Coaches?; Laura said that the SET Program receives funding through a summer grant with additional costs being offset by Community Living, while the JobPath Program is funded through the federal government’s Opportunities Fund • Jean asked if CLSL works with Lambton College?; Laura said they do collaborate and Evan noted that some JobPath participants were hired by Lambton College, so it’s a great partnership • Chris King thanked Evan and Laura for their presentation and for all they do to support individuals with disabilities, noting that he’s very proud of the program | |
| <p>Presentation – <i>Special Incidence Portion Process</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra introduced Secondary Special Education Coordinator Heather Touzin to provide an overview of Ministry funding that helps the Board recoup some of the cost of supporting students with extraordinarily high needs • Heather noted that the Board must apply for Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding each year to offset the expense of additional staff assigned to ensure the health and/or safety of students with extraordinarily high needs (as well as the health and/or safety of others in the school) • SIP funding is necessary when high-need students who are enrolled in a regular class with special education support, or in a self-contained class, require the assistance of two full-time equivalent educational assistants • Heather said applications are due to the Ministry each December noting that necessary supports must be in place <i>prior</i> to the Board submitting a request • There are three different types of SIP claims available, each with its own criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety claims are needed when a student is injurious to themselves or others • Health claims are needed when a student requires intensive support for activities of daily living due to a diagnosed medical condition • Health and safety claims are for a student who requires intensive support for activities of daily living that include both health and safety considerations • Heather provided an overview of the considerable information/documentation that must accompany each application for SIP funding • She noted that Board currently receives ‘Safety’ SIP funding for 6 students (3 elementary and 3 secondary); she said students may get to the point where they no longer need that level of support, so funding isn’t always required during their entire time in the Board • Chris King asked if separate school students transfer to the LKDSB as a SIP student?; Heather said SIP funding is transferrable so, if a student receives SIP funding and changes Boards, the funding follows them | |
| <p>Presentation – <i>Education and Community Partnership Program/Intensive Support Program Review</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra Perkins introduced Mackenzie Horner, a Transitions II Program Teacher, to share details on the Education and Community Partnership (ECP)/Intensive Support (IS) Program Review that took place • Mackenzie outlined the members of the Program Review team as well as the programs that were reviewed, including: the ECPP and IS/Day Treatment Programs which are located at both the John N. Given Learning Centre and Northern Collegiate Institute & Vocational School; the Choices Program that’s available in Chatham (with students living on-site); as well as the Board’s Transitions II Program which operates out of Sarnia-Lambton Rebound | |

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| <p>Presentation – <i>Education and Community Partnership Program/I.S. Review</i> (continued)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programs help students who have disengaged from traditional classrooms and who require extra support to stabilize, to earn credits and transition back to their home school • Mackenzie said that stakeholder surveys were taken to gather feedback from students, parents/guardians and community agencies that provide support to students in these programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings showed: students benefit from being able to achieve credits while learning at their own pace; student’s mental health and therapeutic needs are supported; and students learn life and social skills that help them regulate their emotions so they can transition back to a traditional classroom • Prior to coming into an ECPP/IS classroom, students might not have had positive experiences in school and/or may not have had healthy relationships with adults but, through the program, they can receive individualized supports in a safe space so they can overcome those experiences • The ECCP Review Team focused on: program intake, in-class programming, and transitions; responses to survey questions revealed a need for improvement in the areas of intake and transitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey responses showed the programs provide a positive experience but there is still room for improvement, so the following thoughts were shared: the intake process should be slowed down a bit to ensure the ability to better understand the student’s needs, academic placements, and school history; it was also noted that intake documents are sometimes incomplete with limited access to the student’s OSR, IEP, etc.; and, respondents said it would be beneficial to involve those responsible for helping the student to become successful (i.e. referring partners, counsellors, social workers, home-school staff, community partners, and parents) • Findings showed that when transitioning the student back to their home school: there needs to be a focus on building trusting relationships and developing a plan to gradually transition the student back to school; it would be beneficial to set up a pre-transition visit to allow the student to meet their teacher(s); it’s important to ensure the home school team is aware of the student’s needs/behaviour as well as safety plans and strategies in place; and, it would be helpful to promote the ‘student voice’ when looking to make the transition back to the regular classroom • The importance of allowing students to maintain friendships was noted as was the need for students to feel ‘safe’ by having meetings take place in their classroom so there’s a level of familiarity • Mackenzie said ECPP/IS students often felt unwanted in their home school; she said the programs help students to learn strategies to regulate their emotions and build positive relationships; it’s important to note that students still need support when they return to their home school in order to succeed • Takeaways and action items include creating a standardized process for intake and transitioning of students; creating the space for professional development and collaboration between ECPP/IS staff; and amplifying ‘student voice’ to create positive change • The Program Review Team plan to present their findings to LKDSB administrators and Multidisciplinary Team Members to encourage a cultural shift that will focus on maintaining connections with the student’s home school throughout the process to support student well-being and overall success • Chris King praised the ECPP Program Review Committee for the work they did and thanked Superintendent Barrese and Sandra Perkins for their leadership, noting the importance of these programs, which are often a student’s final ‘safety net’ | |

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| <p>LKDSB 2022 Special Education Plan - Items to Be Reviewed in February</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra Perkins spoke about the items reviewed for February as well as amendments made to the Special Education Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 2.3, an updated Steps to Success was inserted as Page 2 of the <i>Intervention Strategies</i> document and, on Page 4, “Indigenous Representative” replaced First Nation Representative • In Appendix 2.3.2, the <i>Speech and Language Services Administrative Procedure</i>, the most current procedure was linked • In Section 2.4, <i>The Identification Process</i>, on Page 2 under Committee Membership, wording was changed to reflect “the annual review is held in conjunction with the receiving secondary school” and, elsewhere, wording was changed to reflect “the parents are supported by a representative of the elementary school”; on Page 3, under the section on Procedures, the word “card” was removed and elsewhere the word “encouraged” was added; on Page 4, the IPRC information/numbers were updated • In Appendix 2.4.2, <i>Understanding the IPRC Process: A Parent Guide</i>, the SEAC Membership List was updated to reflect the Committee’s current make-up • Appendix 2.5.2, <i>Consent to Disclosure, Transmittal or Examination of Records or Information</i> was updated to include a check-box for “Observations” in the section regarding information being requested • The Plan’s Section 2.5, <i>Educational and Other Assessments</i>, as well as Appendix 2.3.1 - <i>Referral to Special Services</i>, 2.4.1 - <i>IPRC Administrative Procedure (Referral and Statement of Decision)</i>, 2.5.1 - <i>Consent for Psychological Services</i>, and 2.5.3 - <i>Brief Description of Psychological Tests and Terminology</i> were reviewed , but no changes were required/made • There were no questions regarding any of the amendments made | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lori Gall |
| <p>Correspondence</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At its January Meeting, SEAC requested that a letter be sent to the Ministry of Education requesting that ADHD be added to the list of exceptionalities; after reviewing the draft letter prepared by Julia MacKellar, Steve Stokley Moved and Jean MacIntyre Seconded “<i>That the letter be approved for sending to the Minister of Education</i>”; All in favour • The Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee on Special Education Advisory Committees (PAAC on SEAC) ‘Funding Resource Guide’ was provided to the membership for their information and use; the Chair noted that there are some excellent resources that they can rely on • A letter to the Minister of Education, dated December 3, 2021, from Waterloo Region District School Board regarding Bill 172, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder was received; Chris King asked if the Committee should send a letter to the Ministry?; Superintendent Barrese said there are good processes in place with community partners, and reported that this issue is not currently on the Ministry’s radar; after further discussion, the Committee decided not to take any action • A similar letter to the Minister of Education from the Algoma District School Board, dated January 11, 2022, was also received; no action was taken • A letter to the Minister of Education from Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, dated January 13, 2022, regarding online learning supports and universal design for learning was received; no action was taken • A letter, dated February 3, 2022, from the Durham District School Board to the Minister of Education regarding Special Incidence Funding was received; Chris asked if the LKDSB is experiencing a similar concern?; Sandra Perkins said that while we did not experience a claw-back, SIP funding is not commensurate with the actual salaries, so there’s always a funding shortfall; Chris asked about the difference in funding versus actual costs and Sandra said it’s significant; it was noted that the shortfall takes money from other areas of the department; Superintendent Barrese said this level of support would be required for the students with or without SIP funding being available; Sandra said, philosophically, students can and should not be dependent on special funding supports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lori Gall |

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| Correspondence (continued) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris asked if SEAC should prepare a letter about the funding shortfall and, after discussion, it was decided to proceed; Julia MacKellar Moved, Wendy Smith Seconded <i>“That a letter be prepared to identify the funding shortfall that exists between SIP dollars and actual wage and benefit costs”</i>; All in favour • A letter will be brought to the March SEAC Meeting for the Committee’s review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angie/Lori |
| Association Reports and Other Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lori Marvin informed the Committee that Brittany Budziewicz replaced Rose Gallaway in St. Clair Child & Youth’s ‘Dual Diagnosis Program’; most recently, Brittany was employed by the Lambton Kent District School Board | |
| Next Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. via MS Teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All |
| Adjournment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wendy Smith Moved; Janet Barnes Seconded <i>“That the meeting be adjourned”</i>; All in favour. • The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. | |