LAMBTON-KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
~ Thursday, December 9, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m. via MS Teams~

Present:	Chris King – Community Living, Sarnia-Lambton (Chair)
	Janet Barnes – Trustee (Vice-Chair)
	Derek Robertson – Trustee
	Melani Rich, Autism Ontario – Chatham-Kent and Sarnia Lambton Chapters
	Steve Stokley – Community Living, Chatham-Kent
	Wendy Smith, Community Living, Wallaceburg
	Vicki Ware – First Nations Representative
	Julia MacKellar – Learning Disabilities Association of Chatham-Kent
	Lori Marvin, St. Clair Child & Youth Services
Regrets:	Sandra Pidduck, Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario
	Jean MacIntyre – "Member At Large"
	Sandra Perkins, System Coordinator of Special Education
Resource Staff:	Angie Barrese, Superintendent of Education
	Chris Moore, System Coordinator of Multidisciplinary Teams
	Jeff Brosh, Special Education Coordinator
	Bethany Tiegs, Special Education Coordinator
	Tara Mitchell, Special Education Coordinator
	Taryn Lessard, Lambton-Kent Elementary Administrators' Association
	Jayson Campeau, Lambton-Kent Secondary Administrators' Association
	Lori Gall, Recording Secretary
Guest(s):	Valerie Volland, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Elementary Enrichment & Gifted Team
	Joeleen DeGurse-MacDonald, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Assistive Technology Team
	Sonya De Naeyer-Louzon, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Assistive Technology Team
	Paul Gilbert, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Assistive Technology Team
	Brian Jubenville, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Assistive Technology Team
	Stephanie Konstantinou, Itinerant Resource Teacher – Assistive Technology Team
	Helen Lane, Superintendent of Education – Indigenous Education/Leadership and Equity
	Candice Fung, Inclusive Diversity Consultant for Kindergarten to Grade 12

Agenda Item	Details/Discussion	Action Items
Call to Order and Approval of Agenda	• Chris King called the meeting to order • The Chair stated that, if at any meeting, he feels he has a real or perceived conflict of interest, he will declare it in order to allow someone else to take over the Chair for that portion of the meeting • Steve Stokley Moved, Derek Robertson Seconded "*That December 9, 2021 Agenda be approved.*"; All in favour	
Territorial Acknowledgement	• Trustee Barnes recited the Traditional Territorial Acknowledgment	
Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2021	• Steve Stokley Moved, Melani Rich Seconded "*That the Minutes of the November 18, 2021 Special Education Advisory Committee be approved.*"; All in favour	• Lori Gall
Business Arising	• There was no business arising from the Minutes of November 18, 2021	
Presentation – Understanding the Gifted Learner	• Jeff Brosh introduced Val Volland who is currently part of the Special Education Department's Enrichment and Reading Support Team to share information on students who are identified as 'gifted' • The Ministry of Education's definition of a gifted learner is: "those who have an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability such that differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program are required" • Val said that the Otis Lennon Achievement Test is used in Grade 4 to screen students for giftedness • Two audio recordings were shared that provided some insight into the stress that students who are identified as 'gifted' might feel	

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Presentation – Understanding the Gifted Learner (continued)	• Staff must always be aware that all gifted students are different, so there needs to be a focus on what each pupil's specific needs might be • Members of the Enrichment and Reading Support Team provide instruction to help gifted students manage stress and anxiety and provide tools to combat perfectionism • Val explained the difference between the six types of gifted learners which includes: successful learners, creative learners, underground learners, at-risk learners, twice-exceptional learners, and autonomous learners; she noted that there is fluidity in these learning styles which means that students transition from one learning style to another, depending on a number of factors • Julia MacKellar asked Val is she meets with students in several grades at once when visiting a school?; Val said that sometimes they meet with students across different grades at the same time, depending on the activity • Superintendent Barrese asked Val to explain the difference between 'consumers of knowledge' versus 'producers of knowledge'; Val said a consumer of knowledge gathers information to know it and regurgitate it on tests, but they don't do anything with that knowledge, while a producer of knowledge files away things that they've learned, and they think about them at a later date and, sometimes, they work with that information gained, to the benefit of themselves or others • Derek Robertson asked if students can self-identify as one of the six types of gifted learners?; Val said that it's not a good idea for a student to self-identify as gifted without being tested and said that students often span a couple of different types • Jeff Brosh said sometimes, when students are gifted, the lens that's used by society to identify them is too narrow, which results in students feeling frustrated • Val was thanked for the informative presentation	
Presentation – LKDSB's Assistive Technology Team	• Tara Mitchell introduced the Assistive Technology Team and noted the importance of assistive equipment in helping to unlock a student's full potential • Paul Gilbert reminded SEAC that their team previously made a presentation about how students were being supported when they had to pivot to online learning during the school closures and said that, since then, the Team has continued to focus on upgrading the assistive technology training options available to students • He said the Team consists of five people and they see an average of about 400 new students joining their caseload every year • Paul cited the various learning pathways students can benefit from, and spoke about how they have developed a diagnostic assessment tool to help discern which (of six) learning pathways is best for each student • Sonya De Naeyer-Louzon said programs, such as word prediction tools and Google Read & Write, help students to reduce frustration and allow them to be more successful in demonstrating their learning • Stephanie expanded on how they support students using talk & type, etc. • She noted that students use what they refer to as 'explicit practice activities' several times a week to practice the skills they've learned • Brian said the use of recording tools are being integrated into the classroom • Joeleen said that she is focusing on critical needs and has noticed that Grade 9 students take a course called *Learning Strategies*, so she's building a support package for them to utilize; she is also focusing on teacher training regarding the various applications students in their classroom may use • Paul concluded by noting that the team is currently working on developing a hybrid model that allows for both one-on-one training and full class presentations • Lori Marvin asked if the supports discussed can follow students into secondary school and then into post-secondary life?; Joeleen said sometimes post-secondary institutions may require a student's psychological testing to be updated to see if they have outgrown their identification or it has changed	

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Presentation – LKDSB's Assistive Technology Team (continued)	• Superintendent Barrese commented that, while post-secondary schools had been asking for updated assessments, they're beginning to realize that the use of assistive technology is 'good for all' and Accessibility Officers at post-secondary institutions are beginning to allow the use of some devices/programs/applications • Tara wanted to note that while Paul had indicated they have approximately 400 new students come onto their caseload each year, that number doesn't represent all of the other students they support; Paul said that's correct, and clarified that each team member has 10 – 15 schools they support, so a more accurate representation is that each Team Member supports about 600 students • Brian said that they have found that, when presenting to classrooms, it helps to bring up the collective knowledge of the entire the class • Jeff Brosh said assistive technology is a universal practice and cited the way cell phones use text prediction technology, as an example, so seeing these types of integrations into everyday life helps parents (and everyone) to understand the benefit of these applications • Chris King thanked the team for the presentation and noted that, in addition to supporting students, the team members would have to keep abreast with ever-changing technology too	
Presentation – Voluntary Demographic Data Student Census	• Superintendent Barrese introduced Superintendent Helen Lane and Candice Fung, the Board's Consultant for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Inclusive Diversity, who joined the meeting to speak about an opportunity for students • Superintendent Lane said Candice's position is relatively new and sprung out of the Board's desire to focus on anti-oppression in the schools • Candice Fung noted that the census is voluntary and confidential, but is not anonymous, however, student identities will be protected and no specific information about any particular student will be shared • The Board's Homepage, provides information about the Student Census that will be of interest to students/parents/guardians wanting to learn more about why this is being conducted • Superintendent Lane said the goal is to learn more about individual students to identify gaps that may exist in the supports they require, and, to identify student trends in order to proactively pinpoint opportunities for improvement and growth in programs, resources and supports • It was noted that LKDSB educators will be trained so they can support students who do choose to complete the census • Candice provided an overview of some examples of the questions which are focused on: indigenous identity, ethnicity, racial background, religion/spiritual/ belief systems, gender identity, sexual orientation (for students in Grade 7 and up only), disabilities, language, and socio-economic status • The data will help the Board determine what's working well, where change is required, and, where additional programs/supports should be focused • Superintendent Barrese said some people might argue that the Board may already have this information available to us, so she asked Candice to explain why; we can understand how students identify so we can alleviate disparities so they can be successful both in school and in later life by lessening the harmful impacts; she said gathering the individual student information is critical • Superintendent Lane said that the individualized student census will overlap with student achievement levels, and this will create a more fulsome picture of each student; it will unearth data that is currently not available in one place • Melani Rich asked about the frequency of delivering the census?; Superintendent Lane said it could be every 3, 4 or 5 years; once the results come in it might dictate how often the data should be collected; she cited the importance of ensuring that the data is as up-to-date as possible	

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Presentation – Voluntary Demographic Data Student Census (continued)	• Steve Stokley said that some people have a disability, but they don't want to declare that; Superintendent Lane said that the importance of wanting to have the information is what needs to be stressed; she said the data can be possible to cross-reference the responses to existing data to see if a number of students chose not to identify • Chris King said some students cannot answer the questions themselves and he wonders how they'll be supported?; Superintendent Lane said that if the student has a current IEP in place, their teacher(s) would know how to tailor those supports; she said students in grades K – 8 are likely to be completing the census with the help of a parent • Superintendent Lane said that they're seeking additional questions, so if SEAC as any suggestions for additional questions, put them forward • Chris King asked how the members of SEAC could provide input for possible census questions?; Superintendent Lane said that there are mandatory questions that will be asked, but the Board has the option to include some additional questions; if SEAC members have any suggestions for additional questions, feel free to submit them to Superintendent Barrese or Superintendent Lane	• All
October 31, 2021 Exceptional Pupil Numbers	• Superintendent Barrese spoke about the October 2021 exceptional pupil data, noting that non-exceptional students receive special education supports as well • She informed SEAC that when a student is identified, they are eligible for mandatory supports while an individualized education plan (IEP) is put in place for (non-exceptional) students who aren't formally identified and this helps them and, in some instances, may allow the student to use assistive devices, etc. • As of October 31, 2021, there were 2,152 elementary and secondary students formally identified by the LKDSB as having special needs, and an additional 2,124 students who haven't been formally identified but who have an IEP that sets out resources/supports that will help to ensure overall student success	
Association Reports and Other Business	• Melani Rich informed SEAC that, while they used to have 'Chapters' that were predominantly operated by volunteers, Autism Ontario has moved to a regional approach; Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton are now part of Autism Ontario's 'West Region'; the local Facebook group(s) will be deactivated, and area parents/students are encouraged to follow the West Region's Facebook page • Melanie said that this change is a good thing because now they have access to more resources, including staff; and, they will have access to funding streams • Each area will be able to select representatives, so they are looking to pull together a diverse group of participants, not solely parents of children with autism; interested individuals have until December 22, 2021 to apply • Chris King reported that on November 18th they held their AGM, and noted that their Strategic Plan is being finalized • He said they recently learned that employment services are being privatized by the Provincial government; the transition will take place through to 2023; the Province is proposing a for-profit agency which means that programs like their Job Start would have to apply to this agency, so, this could put their summer support and summer employment programs in jeopardy	• All
Next Meeting	• January 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. via MS Teams	• All
Adjournment	• Steve Stokely Moved; Wendy Smith Seconded "*That the meeting be adjourned*"; All in favour; the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.	