

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

September 9, 2019
6:38 p.m. – 8:42 p.m.

MEMBERS

B. Mai, Association for Bright Children
B. Furac, Community Living London
A. Morse, Easter Seals Ontario
B. Harvey, Epilepsy Support Centre
D. Shore-Reid, Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
L. Turner-Otte, Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer
S. Grabstas, Vanier Children's Services
M. Barbeau, Voice for Hearing Impaired Children
M. Cvetkovich, Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex
C. Krygsman, Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN)
T. Grant, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network
S. Young, London Autism Developmental Disabilities
C. Willoughby, Thames Valley Children's Centre
J. Courtney-Nuyens, Thames Valley Council Home and School Associations
J. Bennett, Trustee
B. Yeoman, Trustee
N. Davison, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired

Regrets: L. Pizzolato

ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS

A. Canham, Superintendent of Special Education
A. Leatham, Learning Supervisor
R. Ferrara, Learning Supervisor
J. Bruce, Elementary Principal
T. Birch, Secondary Principal
S. Smith, Corporate Services
K. Snake, Munsee-Delaware Nation
S. Lawrence-Farrant, Autism Ontario London

1. Call to Order

Chair Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. in the London Room at the Education Centre.

2. Confirmation of Agenda

The agenda was approved on motion.

3. Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

4. Report of the Previous Meeting

The report of the 2019 June 11 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was provided for information.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

In response to a question A. Canham reported the motions passed at the 2019 June 11 SEAC meeting were well received by the Board of Trustees. Chair Bennett reported the Trustees had no questions regarding the letters drafted by SEAC.

6. Departmental SEAC Priorities

The committee performed a fifteen minute group activity, the committee members were divided into two groups where they charted priorities "What are the big ticket goals that you would like to see SEAC and/or the Special Education Department accomplish this year?"

Each group presented their results to the committee. Recent Special Education accomplishments were highlighted. A. Canham noted the information will be collated and presented at the 2019 October 1 meeting.

7. Ontario Transfer Payment Agreements

a. Professional Assessments

A. Canham provided an update on the grant allocated to reduce the number of students on wait-lists for assessments. The number of students waiting for speech, language as well as psychological assessments and average wait times were detailed.

Questions of clarification regarding assessment completion, levels of intervention by school teams (tier 1 and 2), capacity for testing, outsourcing testing and differences in approaches between Elementary and Secondary were answered by Administration.

b. LD Pilot Project

A. Canham provided an update on the three year pilot project noting the objective is reading intervention. The pilot project will help build capacity, based on effective practices for students with learning disabilities. The completion date for the pilot is 2020 November 30. With the recent government funding eight new spots were created in the program.

Questions of clarification regarding student selection were answered by Administration.

c. After School Skills Development Program

A. Canham provided an updated on the After School Skills Development Program grant. This project piloted in eight school boards last year. Each board launched the program differently. This pilot/funding will run over three years.

Questions of clarification regarding program implementation, government guidelines for the program, Autism training pilots and the number of students the pilot will impact were answered by Administration.

It was noted the funding cannot be used for transportation.

A. Canham reported input will be sought from SEAC regarding the program.

d. Mental Health Workers in Secondary Schools

A. Canham provided an updated on the Mental Health Worker in Secondary School grant. This project is being led by M. Ferdinand. Funding will be provided to hire and train Mental Health Workers in the delivery of structured psychotherapy to provide mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention.

8. Special Education Plan (Standing Item)

A. Canham provided an update on the Special Education Plan reporting it has been posted on the TVDSB website. A. Canham noted the plan has been posted using a new format to make it more

user friendly. The plan has been submitted to the Ministry of Education (MOE) and is awaiting feedback. A. Canham reported the plan aligns with the MOE requirements.

9. Students on a Modified Day (Standing Item)

A. Canham reported on the number of Elementary students currently on a modified day program, and provided the modified day data for the previous four months. A. Canham stressed the importance of the re-entry plan.

Questions of clarification regarding the maximum amount of time a student can spend on a modified day program and modified day criteria were answered by Administration.

10. Correspondence (Standing Item)

a. Grand Erie DSB

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Grand Erie District School Board to Minister Thompson expressing concern at the proposed changes to the Provincial funding model and the impact it will have on all students, particularly the risk to a successful education this poses for students with special needs. A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

b. Durham Catholic DSB

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Durham Catholic District School Board to Minister Thompson expressing concern about the recent changes to the Provincial funding model for class size averages and mandatory e-learning courses. A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

c. Hastings and Prince Edward DSB

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board to Minister Thompson expressing concern about the recent changes to the Provincial funding model for Autism services and the impact that it will have on children, families and school boards. A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

d. Greater Essex DSB Bill 44

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Greater Essex District School Board to Minister Thompson in support of Bill 44, Education Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder). A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

e. Greater Essex DSB ELearning

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Greater Essex District School Board to Minister Thompson expressing concern about the recent changes to the Provincial funding model for class size averages with the announcement of mandatory e-learning and the devastating impact this will have on students with special education needs. A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

f. Greater Essex DSB Noah & Gregory's Law

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Greater Essex District School Board to Minister Thompson in support of Bill 64, Noah and Gregory's Law

(Transition to Adult Developmental Services and Supports). A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

g. Greater Essex DSB SIP

Chair Bennett presented for information a copy of a letter from the Greater Essex District School Board to Minister Thompson expressing concern regarding changes in funding to the Special Incidence Portion and the impact this will have on the school's ability to support every student with a special education need. A copy was provided to the committee prior to the meeting.

11. Other Business

System wide data was requested for TVDSB's average, largest and smallest class size with the data sorted by grade.

12. Forum: Association Updates

Round table updates were completed. Committee members highlighted some of the events and activities planned by their various organizations throughout the summer. As a follow up to the meeting, event flyers will be emailed out to the committee members as they are received by Corporate Services.

13. 2019-2020 Meeting Dates

The 2019-2020 meeting dates were provided in the agenda package. The next meeting is scheduled for 2019 October 1, 12:15 p.m.

14. Future Agenda Items

None.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m. by motion.

Recommendations: None.

Joyce Bennett
Committee Chair