

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 9, 2020
6:32 p.m. - 9:15 p.m.

MEMBERS

B. Mai, Association for Bright Children
K. Wilson, Autism Ontario London
B. Furac, Community Living London
A. Morse, Easter Seals Ontario (+6:45)
B. Harvey, Epilepsy Support Centre
P. Cook, Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario
D. Shore-Reid, Learning Disabilities Association London
L. Turner-Otte, Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer
S. Grabstas, Vanier Children's Services
N. Davison, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired
M. Cvetkovich, Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex
J. Wright, Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN)
T. Grant, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network
S. Young, London Autism Developmental Disabilities Support Group
J. Gritzan, Thames Valley Children's Centre
S. Thomson, Thames Valley Council Home and School Associations
J. Bennett, Trustee
L. Pizzolato, Trustee
B. Yeoman, Trustee

ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS

A. Canham, Superintendent of Special Education
A. Leatham, Learning Supervisor
R. Ferrara, Learning Supervisor
H. Mahabir, Elementary Principal
T. Birtch, Secondary Principal
M. Chevalier, Elementary Principal
M. Phillips, Secondary Principal
S. Smith, Corporate Services
J. Capaldi, Communication Specialist
K. Snake, Munsee-Delaware Nation
V. Slay, Chippewas of the Thames
C. Lynd, Superintendent of Finance (+6:40-7:30)
S. Macey, Manager of Finance (+6:40-7:30)

1. Call to Order

Chair P. Cook called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. in the London Room at the Education Centre.

2. Welcome

A. Canham introduced and welcomed Principals H. Mahabir and V. Slay; and Autism Ontario London alternate representative K. Wilson. It was noted V. Slay is the new representative from Chippewas of the Thames First Nations.

3. Confirmation of Agenda

The agenda was approved on motion.

4. Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

5. Report of the Previous Meeting

The report of the 2020 February 4 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was provided for information.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. Canham provided an update on the status of the draft Student Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animal policy and procedure. It was noted the policy and procedure currently are available on the TVDSB website for public input.

7. 2019-2020 Special Education Revised Budget

S. Macey presented for information the 2019-2020 Special Education Revised Estimates. Revenues and expenses were outlined.

Questions of clarification regarding SEA funding, grant funding, projected salaries and benefit costs, mental health for Indigenous students and training cost for new SEAC members were addressed.

8. TVDSB's Lexia Implementation Plan

Through a PowerPoint presentation, R. Ferrara introduced Lexia Learning - a tier 2 reading intervention tool. TVDSB's Lexia Implementation Plan was outlined. A. Canham advised Lexia is now available through SEA funding noting an additional 55 schools were provided with Lexia Core5.

It was noted to receive Lexia funding a recommendation from a qualified practitioner is required.

Questions of clarification regarding the implementation of Lexia were addressed by Administration.

9. Professional Development Opportunities for Educational Assistants and Early Childhood Educators

A. Canham advised on the professional development opportunities available for Educational Assistants and Early Childhood Educators. Opportunities include: Promoting Positive Behaviour Toolkit, Positive Behaviour Intervention Support, PBIS WOLD, BMS, De-escalation, Positive Behaviour Supports and The Third Patch. It was noted the training has been/will be provided every PA Day.

Questions of clarification regarding course popularity and mandating course participation were addressed.

10. After School Skills Development Program - Update 2020

A. Leatham provided an update on the After School Skills Development Program (ASSDP) grant. The program is held at Algonquin P.S. and University Heights P.S. and has been active for 7 weeks. Applications are being distributed to TVDSB students for Spring sessions; locations will be determined based on applications.

In response to a question, Administration advised the program is targeted to very specific student profiles.

Questions of clarification regarding data collection were addressed noting the data will be presented to SEAC at the end of the grant.

11. Beta Version of the Behaviour Tool Kit

A. Canham advised on the Beta Version of the Behavioural Tool Kit. He reported this was tested on the 2020 March 6 PA Day by the Educational Assistants and Early Childhood Educators. The tool kit is designed to prevent behaviour from occurring that would typically result in suspension.

The sections in the tool kit include promoting positive behavior, safe and accepting schools, Administrator and leadership supports, and reflective practice and self care.

Questions of clarification regarding making the training available to the public, the implementation plan, viewing/testing the tool kit, Culture for Learning awards for students, adding the parenting perspective, ways to provide future input on the tool kit and scheduling time for staff to review the material were addressed.

SEAC members provided feedback about the tool kit.

A. Canham advised on the Operation Plan goal to reduce suspensions.

12. SEAC/Departmental Priorities (Standing Item)

A. Canham provided the collated feedback from the SEAC survey noting the top five priorities were identified as: Early Identification (ID) of student needs, streamlining the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process, supports for students transitioning, children with externalizing behaviours and emphasis on in-class instruction.

R. Ferrara outlined the process for early ID of student needs. A. Canham described the IEP process noting it is determined by the Ministry of Education. He noted with the migration to a new Student Information System it provides an opportunity to reformat the form and seek input on the process and development of the IEP. A. Leatham reported the Transitions Collaborative Committee has grown and continues to support this priority. A sub committee will be formed to review children with externalizing behaviours and identify ways to best support these students. A. Canham advised on in class instruction reporting Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) will continue to work with teachers to best support students so they are not relying on specific external supports.

Questions of clarification regarding changes to early ID, IEP follow up recommendations/strategies, parent involvement, examples of successful transitions and the current hiring process/qualifications for teachers were addressed.

Discussion occurred regarding the varying types of transitions, mental health behaviour review and making the Special Education AQ1 course a core requirement.

13. Students on Modified Day (Standing Item)

A. Canham reported on the number of Elementary students currently on a modified day program.

It was determined next school year this information will be presented triannually.

A motion to sit until 9:15 p.m. was moved and CARRIED.

14. Special Education Plan (Standing Item)

The meeting scheduled to review the Special Education Plan was cancelled due to Labour action; staff are actively supporting schools. The meeting will be rescheduled.

15. Correspondence (Standing Item)

a. Greater Essex County DSB Letter to Minister Lecce 20 February 2020

Chair Cook presented for information a copy of a letter from the Greater Essex County District School Board to Minister Lecce. The letter expressed concern about the inactive status and effectiveness of the Ministry Advisory Committee on Special Education (MACSE). The letter stated their concerns and recommendations align with those of the Durham District School Board. The Durham letter was provided at the 2020 January 7 SEAC meeting.

16. Other Business

A. Leatham provided an update on new TOSA model reporting a decline in referrals.

17. Forum: Association Updates (Round Table)

Round table updates were completed. Committee members highlighted some of the events and activities planned by their various organizations in the coming weeks. As a follow up to the meeting,

event flyers will be emailed out to the committee members as they are received by Corporate Services.

18. 2020 Meeting Dates

The 2020 meeting dates were provided in the agenda package. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2020 12:15 p.m.

19. Future Agenda Items

- Mental Health and Behaviour Review Committee
- Student Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals policy/procedure- Public Consultation Update
- Mental Health Workers in Secondary School TPA-Update

20. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m. by motion.