

## REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 7, 2020  
12:15 p.m. – 2:51 p.m.

### MEMBERS

C. Thamavongsa, Association for Bright Children  
B. Mai, Association for Bright Children  
S. Lawrence Farrants, Autism Ontario London  
K. Wilson, Autism Ontario London (+2:45)  
B. Furac, Community Living London  
A. Morse, Easter Seals Ontario  
B. Harvey, Epilepsy Support Centre (-1:23)  
P. Cook, Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario  
D. Shore-Reid, Learning Disabilities Association London  
L. Turner-Otte, Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer  
L. Dunlop-Dibbs, Vanier Children's Services  
M. Barbeau, Voice for Hearing Impaired Children  
N. Davison, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired  
M. Cvetkovich, Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex  
J. Wright, Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN)  
C. Krygsman, Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN)  
T. Grant, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network  
S. Young, London Autism Developmental Disabilities  
J. Gritzan, Thames Valley Children's Centre  
J. Bennett, Trustee  
L. Pizzolato, Trustee  
B. Yeoman, Trustee

**Regrets:** S. Thomson

### 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  
S. McNaughton, Assistant to Superintendent

#### 1. **Call to Order**

Chair P. Cook called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. through a virtual Teams meeting.

#### 2. **Welcome**

Chair Cook welcomed everyone and reviewed the virtual meeting format.

#### 3. **Confirmation of Agenda**

The agenda as amended, was approved on motion.

#### 4. **Conflicts of Interest**

None declared.

#### 5. **Report of the Previous Meeting**

The report of the 2020 March 9 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting was provided for information.

#### 6. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

##### a) **#6. Business Arising from the Minutes- 2020 February 6**

IEP Audit Committee: Is postponed indefinitely.

##### b) **#14. Special Education Plan- 2020 March 9**

Special Education Plan: Review of the Ministry of Education expectations around completion of the 2020-2021 plan.

c) **#6.Business Arising from the Minutes – 2020 March 9**

Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals: Public Consultation is available until 2020 April 11, 2020.

**7. Students with Special Education Needs and Learning at Home**

**a. Assessing Assistive Technology**

A. Canham reported the deployment of SEA devices began yesterday. It was noted that TVDSB received approximately 2000 requests for SEA device pick ups. Principals collected the devices from schools, where custodial staff cleaned and packaged them following guidelines provided by the Middlesex Health Unit. The distribution process was outlined noting approximately an additional 10,000 devices will be deployed to families for Learn at home.

In response to a question, it was noted the Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs) for assistive technology are in addition to existing TOSAs allocated for to support differentiation in the classroom.

Professional Services Staff (members of the Social Work and Psychology teams) are reaching out to students within their portfolios and students they have concerns about. A. Canham advised there is information available on the TVDSB website to help parents/guardians facilitate difficult conversations with students. TVDSB has collaborated with community partners to help support students across the region during Covid-19.

**b. Accessing Curriculum Resources**

A. Canham advised that teachers are participating in weekly check-ins with students.

A. Canham provided a virtual tour of the Learn at Home section of the website and recommended SEAC members complete a full review. The Continuity of Learning Special Education section of website was highlighted.

Feedback was provided on the learning platform and captured by A. Canham. It was noted the wide variety of learning needs make it difficult to capture all student needs using an online platform.

Concerns were raised regarding the ability for some parents/guardians to provide education to their child/children for varying reasons, causing parents/guardians to become overwhelmed.

In response to a question, it was noted Administration is working to address internet access concerns for students without internet access.

Appreciation was extended to the TVDSB for the rapid response and aid provided to students and families during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**8. Role of the TOSA Discussion**

A. Leatham reviewed the role of the Special Education Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA). The key elements of the role and tiered approach were outlined. It was noted the Special Education TOSA model will transition from the expert to coaching model. The benefits of the coaching model were outlined.

Questions of clarification regarding TOSA qualifications and training, documenting student progress, determining TOSA placement, TOSA wait times and prioritizing student needs were addressed.

The committee requested data pertaining to the number of students a TOSA supports per year.

**9. Supports for Students with a Gifted Exceptionality 2020-2021**

A. Canham reviewed the current model for supporting students with a gifted exceptionality through direct intervention using gifted itinerant teachers. He outlined the new model of supporting students that will utilize the classroom teacher to support the student throughout the entire school year. This will build capacity of the staff/classroom teacher.

It was noted the role of the gifted itinerant teacher will be replaced with the TOSA. The differences between a gifted itinerant teacher and a TOSA were detailed.

R. Ferrara identified which supports that will remain the same for Elementary and Secondary students and outlined which supports will change.

Questions of clarification regarding cluster sessions, evaluating the new model, classroom learning, TOSA job qualifications, regional sessions and requiring changes to student IEP or IPRC were addressed.

In response to a question, it was noted the 5 FTE TOSAs will be added to the overall allocation of TOSAs.

The committee requested data on the number of additional students identified by screening a year earlier.

B. Mai expressed concerns regarding the new model noting a lack of transparency with the decision to make the changes.

In response to comment, A. Canham noted the changes are directly in line with Special Education Plan. The new model was reviewed by Senior Administration, which is aligned with other Boards across the Province. After consultation with SEAC the plan still needs to be shared with staff.

**10. SEAC/Departmental Priorities (Standing Item)**

Deferred.

**11. Students on Modified Day (Standing Item)**

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

**12. Special Education Plan (Standing Item)**

Addressed under item #6.

**13. Correspondence (Standing Item)**

**a. Avon Maitland District School Board Letter to Minister Lecce**

Chair Cook presented for information a copy of a letter from the Avon Maitland District School Board to Minister Lecce regarding the After School Skills Development Program.

**14. Other Business**

None.

**15. Forum: Association Updates (Round Table)**

Round table updates were completed. Committee members shared details regarding what service(s) their organization is offering and how to access them.

**16. 2020 Meeting Dates**

The 2020 meeting dates were provided in the agenda package. The next meeting is scheduled for 2020 May 4, 6:30 p.m.

**17. Future Agenda Items**

The committee would like to discuss the Ministry Advisory Committee on Special Education (MACSE) at the next SEAC meeting.

**18. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m. by motion.

Paul Cook

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**Chair**