

THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 7, 2025, 12:18 p.m. – 2:42 p.m.
 London Room

Representatives

J. Wright, Community Services Coordination Network
 A. Morse, Easter Seals Ontario
 C. Read, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network
 P. Cook, Inclusion Action Ontario
 D. Shore-Reid, Learning Disabilities Association of London
 (+12:30)
 R. Askew, London Down Syndrome Association
 C. Fortnum, LHSC, Children's Hospital
 S. Antone, Ontario Parents for Visually Impaired Children
 K. Vandersluis, Additional Member
 B. Mai, TVDSB Trustee
 S. Moore, TVDSB Trustee
 L. Pizzolato, TVDSB Trustee (Chair)

Alternates

R. Ramjeawan, Community Services Coordination Network
 T. Grant, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network (+12:30)
 C. Devlin, London Autism and Disabilities Group
 D. Cryderman, LHSC, Children's Hospital
 B. Sell, Ontario Parents for Visually Impaired Children
 A. Mouselimis, Vanier Children's Services
 V. Hlady-MacDonald, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 Children

Absent

T. Leckie, Association for Bright Children
 C. Pecican, Autism London Ontario

Administration and Others

J. Bruce, Superintendent
 M. Chevalier, System Principal
 C. Nichols, System Principal
 N. Howe, Vice-Principal
 M. Miskiewicz, Principal
 H. Powell, Principal
 K. Lambert, Manager
 S. Gingras, Communications
 J. Meyer, Board Services
 R. McGivern, TVCC (-1:45)
 E. Powell, TVCC (-1:45)
 J. Gould, Supervisor, Speech
 Language Pathology Audiology (-1:45)
 D. Fletcher, Learning Coordinator
 (-2:14)
 C. Sachs, TVDSB Trustee

1. Call to Order

Chair Pizzolato called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m.

Chair Pizzolato welcomed new members and conducted a roll call.

2. Confirmation of Agenda

Without objection, the agenda was approved as printed.

3. Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the December 4, 2024 meeting were approved as amended.

5. Unfinished Business

a. Input to SEAC and Special Education Plan

Vice Chair Morse updated committee members on the process for the public to provide feedback to the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) on the Special Education Plan and the process and parameters for providing a delegation to the committee.

Parents/caregivers and members of the public can provide input to the Special Education Plan through the board website. In addition, they can request an opportunity to make a presentation to SEAC through the committee procedures. Individuals are limited to a 5-minute presentation. All SEAC meetings are open to the public and guests are welcome to attend in person or virtually. The Chair of the SEAC does not respond on behalf of the committee but can direct individuals on how to provide input to the SEAC.

b. SEAC Key Issues - Enhancing Early Interventions and Special Education Programs (item# 9)

System Principal Nichols reviewed the potential action items from the December SEAC meeting and sought direction from the group on which items to move forward.

Discussion included the pros and cons for creating a parent pamphlet or tip sheet detailing how parents can find out about community resources, particularly regarding early intervention, and the benefits of creating a sub-committee to conduct the work versus creating working groups with dedicated work time included on the agenda.

A question of clarification was addressed by Administration regarding staff capacity to maintain a parent pamphlet.

It was noted the SEAC has created a parent resource detailing information from SEAC member organizations. Administration committed to locating the information slides and drafting a letter to SEAC member organizations with a request to provide or update their information for this document.

Administration played a video on the Individual Education Plan (IEP), noting it is available for viewing on the SEAC Teams channel.

Chair Pizzolato asked members to review the content of the video and provide feedback at the February meeting.

6. Speech Language Pathology Services Presentation

Superintendent Bruce introduced Manager Lambert, Supervisor Gould, and R. McGivern and E. Powell from the Thames Valley Children's Centre (TVCC) who shared a PowerPoint presentation on the coordination between the TVCC and the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) for speech and language services for students. The presentation outlined the provincial context, local service delivery model, referral pathways, service types and highlighted service challenges and wait times.

Questions of clarification were addressed by the presenters and Administration regarding wait lists and wait times, rationale for the increased demand in services, percentage of time dedicated to assessments versus interventions, and early identification service.

Appreciation was extended to the presenters.

7. Special Incidence Portion (SIP)/Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA)

System Principal Nichols introduced Learning Coordinator Fletcher who provided an overview of the Specialized Equipment Amount (SEA) funding noting key changes on how funding was previously allocated and the funding formula for 2024-2025. It was noted the guidelines have been provided to TVDSB staff to ensure a consistent understanding of the type of equipment eligible for funding.

Questions of clarification were addressed by Administration regarding the adequacy of funding estimates to meet student demand, if the Ministry of Education would provide funding adjustments if needs were not being met, the inclusion of equipment accessories in the funding application, and the potential impact on Jordan's Principle funding.

The TVDSB Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) representatives noted the possibility of bringing the SEAC's SEA funding questions directly to OPSBA.

System Principal Chevalier provided an overview of Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding. SIP funds are currently based on an interim formula, supporting students with extraordinarily high needs who require more than two full-time staff to address their health and/or safety needs.

Questions of clarification were addressed by Administration regarding whether the classroom teacher is included in the staff calculation and whether the funding is adequate to meet current needs.

8. Call to Members - SEAC Handbook Sub-Committee

Committee members were asked to contact Superintendent Bruce indicating their interest in serving on the SEAC Handbook Sub-committee.

9. SEAC Meeting Dates 2024-2025

The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2025.

10. Announcements/Member Updates (Standing Item)

No updates were provided by committee members.

Chair Pizzolato noted an information night will be held to seek public input on the development of the TVDSB's budget.

Chair Pizzolato committed to providing details of the event to committee members.

11. Correspondence (Standing Item)

a. Motion to Send a Letter Regarding Teacher Pre-Service

Chair Pizzolato provided context for the recommendation.

Discussion included the recipients of the letter and the content including whether the SEAC needs to compile more information regarding pre-service program curriculums.

Questions of clarification were addressed by Administration regarding new teacher screening during the interview process and TVDSB professional development on the topic.

Without objection, a housekeeping amendment **TO insert** “detailed understanding of all exceptionalities and their characteristics” after “mandatory training on special education including” and **TO insert** “and implementation” before “Individual Education Plans (IEP) was adopted.

The following recommendation was moved and **CARRIED**:

THAT the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) write a letter to the Minister of Education copying other boards of education and the College of Teachers, expressing Thames Valley District School Board's SEAC concerns about University teacher pre-service programs. The letter will include a request to require all University teacher pre-service programs to include mandatory training on special education, including detailed understanding of all exceptionalities and their characteristics, effective development and implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEP), the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC process) and effective instructional and assessment methods

AND

THAT the letter is shared with Board of Trustees for endorsement by the Board.

The following amendment was moved and **ADOPTED**:

TO Add “AND THAT the letter is shared with the Board of Trustees for endorsement by the Board” after “assessment methods.”

12. 2024-2025 SEAC Workplan

Chair Pizzolato requested committee members review the SEAC workplan and submit priority items to the SEAC Chair to facilitate agenda planning.

Action items were reviewed.

13. Adjournment

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Recommendation:

THAT the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) write a letter to the Minister of Education copying other boards of education and the College of Teachers, expressing Thames Valley District School Board's SEAC concerns about University teacher pre-service programs. The letter will include a request to require all University teacher pre-service programs to include mandatory training on special education, including detailed understanding of all exceptionalities and their characteristics, effective development and implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEP), the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC process) and effective instructional and assessment methods

AND

THAT the letter is shared with the Board of Trustees for endorsement by the Board.

Lori-Ann Pizzolato
Committee Chair

Recording Secretary: JM