



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

Present: Chair W. Rose, L. Boswell, P. Boutis, C. Brady, T. Buchanan, R. Collver, A. Csoff, L. DeJong, A. Detmar, M. Gatopoulos, J. Gemmill, K. Jones, P. Kuckyt, F. Lainson, K. Mertins, C. Purslow, L. Scott, L. Sheppard, J. Trovato, T. Waldschmidt, J. White, T. Wilson.

Regrets: P. Bagchee, B. Bruce (T. Sault), L. Nydam, L. Thompson.

Recorder: P. Curran

A - 1 **Opening**

(a) **Welcome**

W. Rose called the meeting to order at 6:02 and read the Land Acknowledgment Statement.

(b) **Agenda Additions/Deletions/Approval**

Add J-1 (b) Reminder to review ONSIS Data

Add J-1 (c) Reminder to Review Suspensions, Expulsion and Exclusion data for Students with Special Needs

Add J-1 (d) Correspondence from ACSLP The Association of Chief SLPs of ON District School Boards which will be forwarded to the recording secretary for inclusion in the January agenda package.

Moved by: T. Waldschmidt

Seconded by: C. Brady

THAT the SEAC 21-04 Agenda for Thursday, December 9, 2021 be approved as amended.

Carried

B - 1 **Timed Items**

(a) **A Day in the Life of the Psychoeducational Consultant**

K. Mertins introduced C. Purslow who is the Psychoeducational Consultant for the Southwest area of Grand Erie.

Ms. Purslow shared her role helps parents understand how their child functions. She conducts assessments that can take up to 10 hours and approximately 20 hours to fully write the assessment.

In a tiered approach, strategies and approaches to benefit all students, as well as professional development and resources on various topics to support students with special education needs are considered Tier 1 support.

At Tier 2, consults occur at Resource Team meetings and case conferences and further information is provided about resources or programs to support students.

Tier 3 interventions include comprehensive psycho-educational assessments, consultation and program recommendations based on previous psycho-educational assessments.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

How Many Students do you Support in a Week?

One student per week during the assessment process; then one or two consultations and up to two Resources Team meetings per day where 10 to 20 students are discussed.

How Many Students do you Support in a Year?

Depending on the complexity, 20 to 30 assessments, 10 to 20 file reviews and 40 consultations about specific students.

The number of students supported depends on the needs of the specific schools with which they are working.

How do Schools Access your Support?

Schools follow the resource Team model for students for whom they have concerns. Students are also discussed at Resource Team Meetings and prioritized according to needs.

A Day in the Life of a Psycho-educational Consultant

8:00 – 9:30 Coffee, then an intake or feedback meeting with a family.

9:30 – 11:30 Resource Team meeting with a school

11:30 – 12:00 IPRC Meeting

12:00 – 3:00 Work with students and staff in schools to gather and review information being mindful of student needs for breaks.

3:00 – 4:00 Return to the office for research, reading, writing, scoring and preparing for the next day.

How Does our Role Support Students?

- a) Supports Students by identifying personal and learning strengths and needs and making individualized recommendations to support learning and well-being.
- b) Supports Families by encouraging connection to community services and provides evidence-based next steps while helping demystify the child's learning profile.
- c) Supporting Schools by providing consultative services about child development, learning, and well-being.

Questions:

W. Rose – Do you find there is currently a significant wait list?

– Is it impacted by COVID?

C. Purslow – currently wait lists are addressed at the school level. They do not seem to have been adversely affected by COVID. Parents can choose a private consultation at their own expense, but this option can be a barrier for those families without health benefits. Staffing shortages contribute to the number of assessments that can be completed, which in turn affects wait lists.

W. Rose – asked SEAC if they wish to review at a future meeting to consider advocating for additional funding for resources to help reduce the wait list.

R. Collver – do you review the wait list to determine if some children should be moved up?



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

C. Purslow – students are assigned to a school wait list by the LITE system; the wait list is reviewed regularly at Resource Team Meetings. Staff will try to keep the priority set by each school. As well, sometimes students new to our board will need to move ahead of students already in the system.

L. DeJong – is there an average age or grade for referrals and assessments? Psychoeducational

C. Purslow – typically we do not see students before age eight (8) as awaiting natural development. If the child has a diagnosis of global development, they may be assessed at age seven. Assessments occur in the secondary grades if applicable.

(b) **Standard 16 – Transportation**

J. White welcomed P. Kuckyt, Manager of Student Transportation Services Brant Haldimand Norfolk (STSBHN) and shared the suggested recommendations following their annual review of the standard.

Members were provided with two resource documents, Standard 16 and an excerpt from the K-12 Accessibility Standards focusing on transportation.

While the standard discusses transportation for students with special education needs, the term “exceptionalities” was replaced with “special education needs” and the list of exceptionalities was removed from the standard. Language identifying the collaborative approach to transportation decisions for students with special education needs was added.

In the policy and procedures some changes were made to clarify the process. Provision for the collaborative development of a Plan of Care including driver training was added. As well a link to STSBHN policies and procedures was added and a statement confirming STSBHN annually reviews transportation requirements for service providers under their contracts.

Questions:

R. Collver – requested the revised Standard and the K-12 recommendations be sent to Members.

J. White - The document showing proposed revisions and the K-12 recommendations will be sent to SEAC by the Recording Secretary.

R. Collver – stated even though we are bound by contracts we must ensure bus drivers and service providers understand they are transporting students with special needs and /or disabilities.

P. Kuckyt – clarified expectations do exist in current contracts, but service providers were not required to report on past practices to be considered for contract renewal. Prior to being hired, drivers are provided with documentation and training.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

C - 1 Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings

(a) Ratification of Minutes from Thursday, November 18, 2021

- i. M. Gatopoulos was Present
- ii. T. Wilson was Present

Moved by: L. Boswell

Seconded by: K. Jones

THAT the SEAC 21-03 minutes for Thursday, November 18, 2021 be approved as amended.

Carried

(b) Special Education Guiding Principles

i. P01 Service Provision for Students with Special Education Needs

J. White explained members would have received this document that replaces the former Guiding Principles which was also sent for comparison.

Following research with other school boards, it was learned many boards embed their guiding principles in Standard 2.

P01 was developed to outline the board's belief and overall vision of the board's Model for Special Education and will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in January 2022. It will then be available for comment. The document also refers to Standard 02 General Model for Special Education.

ii. Standard 02 General Model for Special Education - Update

This standard contains a lot of important information which staff is working at to make more reader friendly. Primarily they are removing redundant or superfluous language when possible.

The board's new vision was added along with four additional points increasing them to twelve from the former eight. These points will guide the programs and services.

The standard also embeds many of the K-12 recommendations for education review.

Questions:

W. Rose – Point 5 is worded a bit awkwardly and she suggested removing the word "are".

"The principles of accessible education, equity, equality and human rights are provided in stand-alone, and are embedded into all, learning opportunities."

W. Rose – Point 10 suggested adding the word "to" prior to the phrase "...eliminate barriers".

"All work together to create and maintain inclusive and equitable school communities and eliminate barriers to full participation."

R. Collver – is the elimination of additional human resources support in Point 9 intentional?



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

"The classroom educators are the primary support for all students in school. Additional human resource supports work as partners with the classroom educators by coaching, co-teaching and co-learning in order to address the strengths and needs of the students."

J. White – yes, staff wanted to focus on the key people who support students in classrooms or the educators in the classroom.

R. Collver – how will a parent know who is supporting the teacher?

J. White – there are far more resources than the Learning Resource Teacher so the list would be very lengthy. As well, staffing is listed in Standard 12 which describes the different types of supports.

R. Collver – who is gathering the data referenced in Point #11 and who is analyzing the data?

"Intentional collection, analysis and use of relevant data to fully understand learners' strengths and needs removes barriers and supports appropriate interventions."

J. White – will follow up with the team to review our data collection and analysis process

iii. Standard 02 - Appendix B

Ms. White explained the flow chart in this document was previously referred to as the pre-referral process but was renamed to match other references in the special education plan.

She explained other changes such as adding a line for Parent/Guardian Information and Input" and the removal of it from the paragraph for teacher consulting with principal or Learning Resource Teacher. All professionals in a school building are intended to support students. Parental consent is however, required for the Resource Team consultation.

An inaccurate bullet that indicated "Consultation with System LRT/Lead EA." was removed from the paragraph beginning "School Team (ST) – includes Principal...".

"School Team (ST) provides more detailed assessment..." Removed the statement referencing case conferences and removed "Consultation with System LRT/Lead EA." Updated other information.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

(c) **SEAC Letter of Support for Summer Programs**

R. Collver commented this letter was well written but would like to see the request made a bit bolder.

P. Boutis requested the letter also be sent to T. Barrett and W. Bouma.

Moved by C. Brady

Seconded by: L. Boswell

THAT the SEAC Letter of Support for Summer Programs be sent to all addressees as amended.

Carried

D - 1 **New Business**

(a) **Self-Contained Planning – Input Session**

Ms. White explained staff is beginning to plan for the students of 2022-23 who will be in self contained classes. She noted previously a chart with numbers was shared with SEAC, but this information won't be available until the January meeting.

She did provide power point slides showing the number and types of self-contained classes in both the elementary and secondary panels.

L. Dejong – intensive support for autism; is it possible for these kids can look at bridge or vocational life skills. For example, if the support needs are managed at elementary do we need as many at secondary?

J. White recognized this as a good question and although she currently did not know the numbers, she shared that generally, elementary students in intensive support autism classes would most often transition to intensive support autism classes at the secondary level.

J. White – reviewed the revisions for the “Vision for Special Education”

Consultation Questions:

1. What considerations should we have with regards, to self-contained placements in elementary school? Is this an example of streaming in elementary. What are the impacts – Positive and Negative?
2. What are the assets vs barriers in offering these types of placements in our board? Both at elementary and secondary level?

P. Boutis – realizes that regular classes are quite large which can create difficulty for some students in concentrating. Also, recognized some students from the life skills classes are not treated well in regular settings. It is also critical to reorganize how teachers are delivering the lessons.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

T. Buchanan – students learn by example and often focus on employment when streamed. Students need to learn at a young age that everyone has a gift. Students struggle in these classes and other students struggle in fully integrated class.

L. DeJong - self contained doesn't have to be forever. She would like to see more of it in elementary schools treated similarly to a bridge program. Help students feel more connected to the school community. There is less opportunity for connection if their school is not in their neighbourhood.

J. White – there have been many conversations on this topic, but we need to be mindful of the child's needs and bring them back to the classroom whenever possible,

T. Buchanan – would like to see a complete overhaul of the system developing creative ways of helping kids and teachers. Would like to see quiet settle down spaces where kids can go without being segregated so they are with the same people all the time.

T. Wilson – Grade 9 Option Sheets - could students choose two and drop something later if they aren't interested in that topic?

J. White – there are not a lot of choices on the G9 option sheet.

A. Detmar – loves the concept and would like to explore ways to support the teacher and educational staff. This is such a great learning opportunity to prepare students for life beyond school where they won't be segregated.

T. Waldschmidt - destreaming is a way to put everyone on the same page. We will all leave school at some point and carry on with our lives. He does realize that some students don't do well in an open area.

J. White – staff is looking at barrier free education and the best opportunity for students beyond secondary school

(b) **Technology Access Clinic (TAC) – Wait Lists**

K. Mertins explained the TAC is located at the Ron Joyce Children's Health Centre and is part of the McMaster Health Sciences. The facility is home to a range of outpatient services focused on child rehabilitation and developmental health approved by ADP (Assistive Devices Program).

Children in the Grand Erie DSB catchment would get communication devices from the Ron Joyce Centre but are being told there is a three (3) year wait list. We believe three (3) years is too long for a young child to not have a communication device and to be unable to properly access the curriculum.

We know an inability to communicate effectively leads to frustration and often generates undesirable behaviour patterns.



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

School staff are aware of the increasing number of children entering school with no or low verbal communication while waiting for TAC referrals.

Would like SEAC to write a letter of advocacy for reducing the wait list time for TAC.

L. DeJong is in favour of a letter and noted not all areas have long wait lists. She asked if there is some data that explains the inequitable delays?

K. Mertins shared that the access to assistive devices seem to be highly varied across Grand Erie

L. DeJong noted they try to do referrals earlier.

Moved by: L. Scott

Seconded by: R. Collver

THAT the Grand Erie DSB SEAC compose a letter advocating the reduction of wait times for students requiring assessment from the Technology Access Clinic which will be voted on electronically and following approval, sent through Canada Post on January 3, 2022.

Carried

E - 1 **Other Business**

(a) **SEAC Chair and Vice-Chair Election Process for January 2022**

W. Rose reminded members the annual election for Chair and Vice-Chair will be held in January. Members may nominate any other member and may also self-nominate. Anyone interested in learning more about either position is invited to contact either W. Rose or P. Boutis.

(b) **Guest Speaker – Michael Jacques**

W. Rose spoke with Michael's father who said his son would be available for 30-45 minutes to share his story and provide Q&A. He would like SEAC to provide a few dates from which they can choose.

Mr. Jacques noted books can be purchased ahead of time in the event of a virtual meeting. In the meeting is physical, he notes they will need travel costs reimbursed.

Members were excited for the opportunity to purchase books and to hear Michael's story.

T. Buchanan suggested SEAC provide an honorarium, perhaps a gift card, as the Jacques do not charge a fee for their presentation.

J. White will share this information with L. Thompson and W. Rose will check with her for dates



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

F - 1 Standing Items

(a) Policy/Procedures Out for Comment

Members were advised to send any comments on the following Policies and Procedures

to: policiesandprocedures@granderie.ca by January 13, 2022

- **F2 Budget Development Process**
- **SO-008 Community Partnerships**
- **SO-08 Community Partnerships**

(b) Trustee Updates

T. Waldschmidt –

Would like to wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless you and your family.

R. Collver –

- The Trustee annual elections were held this past Monday, when T. Waldschmidt was elected Chair of the Committee of the Whole, S. Gibson was elected Board Chair and Brian Doyle was elected Board Vice-Chair.
- Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) are going home with students over the Christmas break.

G - 1 Information Items

(a) K. Mertins Retirement

W. Rose informed members K. Mertins retirement and noted we will miss her very much as she has brought so much knowledge, patience and curiosity to the meetings. Her passion for education is obvious and she has left large shoes to fill.

Ms. Mertins thanked SEAC members for all their contributions and advocacy and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

R. Collver informed members that Ms. Mertins was presented with the board's inaugural Lead Learn and Inspire Award. This honour was presented to her she leads with her heart and does everything so well. R. Collver indicated her gratitude for being able to work with Ms. Mertins.

H - 1 Community Updates

(a) Nil

I - 1 Correspondence

(a) Nil



Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, December 9, 2021

6:00 PM

MS Teams Virtual Meeting

MINUTES

J - 1 **Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning**

- (a) Transitions to Post-Secondary Destinations
- (b) OnSIS Data
- (c) Suspensions, Expulsions and Exclusions for students with special education needs
- (d) Correspondence from The Association of Chief Speech Language Pathologists (ACSLP) re PPM 81
- (e) Psycho-Educational Assessments and Wait Lists
- (f) Memo re New Program for Students on Autism Spectrum – J. White / L. Sheppard

K - 1 **Next Meeting**

Thursday, January 20, 2022 | 6:00 PM | MS Teams

L - 1 **Adjournment**

W. Rose wished everyone a safe and happy holiday and hope that everyone gets some rest and relaxation.

Moved by: L. DeJong

Seconded by: L. Boswell

THAT the SEAC 21-04 meeting held December 9, 2021 be adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Carried