

Minutes of the **WQSB Special Education Advisory Committee** meeting held on Monday November 14, 2022 held via virtual platform (Teams), at 6:30 pm.

PRESENT: Members: Jennifer Brownrigg (Secretary), Paul Dostaler, Megan Feltham, Jessica Fortier (Vice-Chair), Carolyn Hayes, Jennifer Idone, Jenna Jenkins, Kim Kourtsidis, Karenne Lachapelle, Roman Laroche (Chair), Trina Lasch, Sarah McGough, Stephanie Michaud, Sharon Pinkston, Dana Scott, Andrea Gage (Management Rep), Cindy Smith (Professional Rep), Kathlene Vibert (Teacher Rep), Darlene Doucet (Support Staff Rep)

Observers: Lisa Falasconi (DG Rep),

Regrets: Michaela Montour

1. Reading of Land Acknowledgement

Roman L. read the land acknowledgement.

2. Approval of Agenda

22/23-06 Adoption of the Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Stephanie Michaud, seconded by Andrea Gage that the Agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Approval of Minutes

22/23-07 Adoption of the October 20, 2022 meeting Minutes.

IT WAS MOVED by Trina Lasch, seconded by Andrea Gage that the Minutes of the October 20, 2022 meeting be approved.

Carried

4. Reports

4.1. SEAC Chair Report

Standing item, no report for this evening.

4.2. SEAC Vice-Chair and EHDAA Parent Commissioner Report

Standing item, no report for this evening.

4.3. SEAC Parents' Committee Representative Report

Standing item, Michaela Montour not present, no report this evening.

4.4. Sub-Committee Reports

A standing Agenda item, no reports as sub-committees not yet established.

5. SEAC's Mandate

Roman L. outlined the mandate of the Special Education Advisory Committee as defined in the Education Act (s. 187)

187. The functions of the advisory committee on services for handicapped students and students with

social maladjustments or learning disabilities are:

- 1. To advise the school board on a policy for the organization of educational services to handicapped students and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.*
- 2. To advise the resource allocation committee and the school board on the allocation of financial resources to the services intended for those students.*
- 3. To advise the commitment-to-student-success committee on the commitment-to success plan.*

The committee may also advise the school board on the implementation of an individualized education

plan for a handicapped student or a student with social maladjustments or learning disabilities.

Questions, Comments and Discussion

Roman L. opened the floor to questions, comments, and discussions regarding SEAC's mandate.

Lisa F. informed the Committee the budget for next year will be reviewed in April-May. The [Commitment to Success Plan](#) is up at the end of 2023. Consultations for the next plan with SEAC will begin in the spring 2023. The next Commitment to Success Plan will cover the years 2023-2028.

6. Handbook of Internal Rules & Procedures

6.1. Overview

Roman L. encourages everyone to review the [Handbook](#) while keeping in mind it has not been updated frequently. A sub-Committee will be tasked with reviewing and updating the Handbook. Special thanks to Jessica F. for her recent work on the handbook.

6.2. Expectations

The Expectations section of the Handbook was reviewed by Roman.

SEAC aims to provide a safe, non-judgmental environment where members are comfortable in sharing their ideas and perspectives. Members are expected to maintain a

collaborative, respectful and open dialogue/participation within the committee. Members should be committed to:

- *Regular attendance at meetings*
- *Inform the Chair of any foreseen absence*
- *Represent and conduct themselves with moderation, honesty, integrity, courtesy, honour and respect*
- *Read documentation provided*
- *Participate and contribute to meeting discussions*
- *Ensure respectful dialogue between members*
- *Make contributions that are in the best interest of the special needs population*
- *Be prepared to discuss special needs as it pertains to the greater population*
- *Refrain from using specific student/staff names*
- *Maintain confidentiality where necessary*

Roman L. hopes to abide by these expectations during the Committee meetings and instill a positive difference in the lives of the parents, children and the broader school board.

7. Presentation from WQSB's Director of Complementary Services, Lisa Falasconi

Lisa F. shared the Overview of Special Needs at the WQSB power point presentation available to Committee members on Google Drive

Questions

Andrea G. asked who chooses which special classroom children are assigned to? Lisa F. replied, Teachers and school usually make the request and recommendation. The Board reviews the request. All parties do their best to keep the child within their community.

Trina L. asked how/if inclusiveness is monitored, ie. Accessible documents and materials? Lisa F. replied there is no formal way of monitoring. The [Commitment to Success Plan](#) and each school's Educational Project document are used to monitor the success of children over time.

Jessica F. suggested Ruth Ahern, Assistant Director General, Director of Adult Education & Vocational Training, and Director of Communications be invited to speak to the Committee regarding New Approaches, New Solutions (NANS) network.

Trina L. asked if the Safe Schools policy has been with a view to Trauma Informed Practices and the availability of statistics on violence and aggression in schools. Lisa F. replied the information will be available when the Annual Report is published. A copy may be provided to SEAC sooner.

Roman inquired if previous metrics are available? As per Lisa F. previous reports shared statistics on incidences, rather than the number of perpetrators and victims. In 2021-2022

perpetrators and victim statistics were collected for the first time. Note, it is the Ministry of Education who define what goes in Annual Report.

Dana S. asked how parents can find out which Complimentary Service providers have visited their child. Lisa F. there is currently no official protocol but this is definitely something to reflect on and consider. Cindy S. (Professional Services representative), could be difficult to establish a protocol for all interactions. Impromptu meetings, quick observations with a child can occur. Official meetings and recommendations go in the child's file.

Jessica F. suggested an addition to the [IEP toolkit](#), an additional question for the *Parent/Caregiver Insights*, "Has Complimentary Services has reached out to my child during this month?"

Roman L. noted it is important for parents to be aware of what has happened to assist in understanding how decisions are made. The Committee should look at and provide advice to the Board on the flow of communications.

Trina L. asked what types of professional development sessions/activities specific to special education will be available to principals/teachers this year? Noted, not all teachers have the required skills to develop IEPs. Lisa F. replied the Resource Teachers Network offers 8 sessions per year with an eye to approaches, resources, ongoing training. Remedial and supporting teachers have ongoing training, colleagues can join. However, schools need to be able to release teachers on a school day. Nuts and bolts sessions can be viewed by all teachers online at any time.

Trina L. noted there is a need to improve disability literacy at Hadley Philemon. Andrea G. noted there are resource challenges in the schools with a large population of students. Darlene added the resource teachers who attend the Resource Teachers Network are coaches for the teachers who may not have the Special Education specific training.

Roman L. recognized the gap of skills, knowledge, and experience with growing number of needs for IEPs. A requirement of basic IEP skills for all teachers would be beneficial to avoid disparities in services between schools.

8. SEAC members joining multiple sub-committees

Proposal to allow SEAC members to join multiple sub-committees, to ensure as much participation as possible while ensuring Committees have the human resources they need. There are no current internal procedure rules regarding limiting sub-committee participation.

Jessica F. asked the group to keep in mind sub-committees can be very time consuming. Meeting conflicts will occur.

22/23-08 Motion to limit the number of sub-committees a SEAC member can join to a maximum of two be added to the SEAC Handbook.

IT WAS MOVED by Trina Lasch, seconded by Andrea Gage that the motion **to limit the number of sub-committees a SEAC member can join to a maximum of two be added to the SEAC Handbook** be approved.

Carried

9. Sub-Committees:

A survey was completed by Committee members prior to the meeting to record their interest in joining sub-committees. An email will be sent to each member based on the survey results. Sub-committees must commit to meet at least once per month. The results of the survey can be found in Annex 1 of the Minutes.

The Committee's are as follows:

- Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee
- Events Sub-Committee
- Communications Sub-Committee
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Sub-Committee

Questions & Discussion

Lisa F. recommended a list of sub-committee members be shared in these minutes or the minutes of the next meeting.

Jessica F will add new folder in Google drive for each sub-committee

Darlene inquired if only parents can join sub-committees?

Roman L. stated everyone is welcome to sit on a sub-committee, with the exception of the Communication sub-committee where website copyright issues come into play as the SEAC website is independent of the WQSB and its employees.

10. Election (E-Vote): Alternate for Parents' Committee Representative

Nominations for parents committee representative

Kim Kourtsidis self nominated and was elected by acclamation.

11. SEAC Budget and WQSB Funding

Roman L. shared with the SEAC Committee that it has been allotted a \$1000 operating budget. He noted that in collaboration with the Director of Complimentary Services SEAC can put together outreach initiatives as there is a budget line for this purpose.

SEAC has only one financial commitment at this time, the SEAC website, on a subscription-based model with a 2 year renewal.

Jessica F. added, the 2-year subscription was paid in 2021 last year. No payment is required to GoDaddy in 2022.

Roman suggested the SEAC increase activities ex. speakers, broader public events. How is SEAC's funding calculated? Lisa F. does not believe it is tied to the number of IEPs as the amount has not changed in 5 years suggested it may be tied to the budgets of internal WQSB committees. Lisa will provide an official statement confirming SEAC's budget. Roman agreed spending records would be helpful for present and future Committees

Lisa F. reminder the Committee invoices and receipts must be received by the end of May, prior to end of school year.

Meeting Extension at 8:25pm

22/23-09 IT WAS MOVED by Darlene Doucet, seconded by Megan Feltham that the meeting be extended by 15 minutes.

Carried

12. Meeting Dates:

As per the results of the survey sent to Committee members prior to the meeting. The Committee agreed to move the following SEAC meetings to the subsequent Tuesday when meetings conflict with a holiday.

- January 9, 2023
- March 13, 2023
- April 10, 2023

13 SEAC activities and consultations process

13.1 Special education policy

Roman L. recommended members take the time to review, familiarize with updated version for consideration of future revisions. Lisa will the share the document with the Committee.

13.2 Financial Allocations

SEAC is consulted yearly regarding financial allocations. The process is initiated near the end of December. It is an extensive exercise that continues January thru February. Additional meeting may be required for discussion.

Jessica F. asked when RAC (Recognition of Acquired Competencies) questions would be available? Lisa F. replied a RAC meeting is scheduled for December where the consultation process will be discussed. A presentation by the Director of Finance is likely in January. The Tool for input is to be completed by March 2023.

13.3. Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Implementation

The Committee will be consulted regarding overall IEP implementation near the end of the school year.

13.4. Commitment to Success Plan

The Committee will be consulted regarding the Commitment to Success Plan.

14. Varia

Trina L. shared the Federal Government's hosting of the National Autism Conference, <https://nationalautismconfnationaleautisme.vfairs.ca/>. A virtual conference open to the public.

Roman L. thanked the group for their participation.

15. Adjournment

22/23-10 Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED by Jessica Fortier, seconded by Darlene Doucet that the meeting be adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Carried

Annex 1

SEAC Sub-Committee Membership 2022-2023

IEP Sub-Committee	School
Paul Dostaler	Wakefield
Megan Feltham	Chelsea
Jennifer Idone	Symmes/D'Arcy
Roman Laroche	South Hull
Trina Lasch	PWHS
Stephanie Michaud	Hadley
Sharon Pinkston	Chelsea
Darlene Doucet	Support Staff Rep

Events Sub-Committee	
Jessica Fortier	Poltimore
Jennifer Idone	Symmes/D'Arcy
Roman Laroche	South Hull

Policy & Procedures Sub-Committee	
Jennifer Brownrigg	Hadley
Jessica Fortier	Poltimore
Roman Laroche	South Hull
Trina Lasch	PWHS

Communications Sub-Committee	
Jennifer Brownrigg	Hadley
Jessica Fortier	Poltimore
Sarah McGough	Wakefield