

Minutes of the WQSB **Special Education Advisory Committee** meeting held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 held via virtual platform (Teams), at 6:30 pm.

**PRESENT:**

**Members:**

Louise Belisle, Meaghan Dufour (Chair), Jessica Fortier (Vice-Chair), Iris Kiewlet, Kimberly Kourtsidis, Karenne Lachapelle, Kathy Needham (Parent Committee Rep), Sharon Pinkston, Bryan Poirier, Dana Scott, Andrea Smith, Letitia Taylor (EHDA A Parent Commissioner), Andrea Gage (Management Rep), Cindy Smith (Professional Rep), Kathlene Vibert (Teacher Rep), Andrew Isaac Wicks, Cathy Girard (Support Staff Rep), Olivia Hazim, Amy Taylor

**Observers:** Lisa Falasconi (DG Rep)

**Regrets:** Natalie Filiou, Dana Scott, Scott Laporte

**1. Approval of Agenda**

21/22-08 Adoption of the Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Letitia Taylor seconded by Bryan Poirier that the Agenda be approved with no amendments.

**Carried**

**2. Approval of Minutes**

21/22-09 Approval of Minutes of November 15, 2021.

IT WAS MOVED by Olivia Hazim, seconded by Cindy Smith that the November 15, 2021 meeting Minutes be approved.

**Carried**

**3. Reports**

3.1. EHDA A Commissioner report - Letitia Taylor

3.1.1. Annual report of the WQSB tabled on November 30th, Letitia will forward this report to the Committee with highlights of sections relevant to the Committee's mandate.

3.1.2. Issue #1: formation of an administrative committee to review the complaints procedure for s.18. This initiative has been put on hold due to a newly proposed law by CAQ, Bill 9. This would replace the complaints process for all Boards. A draft of the Bill (scheduled to be passed as early as January) will be shared and discussed for the January SEAC meeting. Revamping of the system is in response to parent complaints in the French system. Issues raised with the WQSB Administrative Committee on s18 are now being addressed by Bill 9.

3.1.3. The minutes of the Education Policy Committee's (EPC) June meeting which were tabled at the Council of Commissioner's November meeting contained the following reference:

3.1.3.1. Individual Education Plans – minutes indicated that EPC members met to discuss a list of concerns submitted by WQTA pertaining to IEPs. The goal of this meeting was to make the process better for all involved. The importance of collaboration between the various stakeholders in the creation of IEPs was discussed and it was noted that the expectations around IEPs need to be explicit. Specifically, the creation of an IEP should be a team effort and not solely taken on by one teacher. Brian Smeltzer explained that the review includes the quantity of IEPs as well as the possibility of remedial work that can be done beforehand. This topic will be revisited at a future EPC meeting.

3.1.4. The EHDAA Parent Commissioner noted: Whereas,

3.1.4.1. It is with regret that we take note of the decision to exclude the elected EHDAA Parent Commissioner representing SEAC to the WQSB Council of Commissioners from future Educational Policy Committee meetings;

These meetings could, among other topics of pertinent interest, involve issues related to the process of drafting IEPs; and

Because of SEAC's mandated role to advise the WQSB, having a clear understanding of the concerns of teachers and the Administration with regard to the IEP process, which should also include parents, is of particular concern to SEAC.

**Resolution:** It is resolved to urge the WQSB to approve and advocate for the EHDAA Parent Commissioner to be included in all Committees of Council where the interests and concerns of the special education community of students and their families are raised **and** a request is made to attend.

21/22-10 Resolution on inclusion of EHDAA Parent Commissioner in Committees of Council.

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belisle, seconded by Jessica Fortier that the resolution be approved.

**Vote: No objections, 3 abstentions, Carried**

Discussion:

- How did this arise?
  - Union President indicated that the SEAC member should inquire with Complementary Services or SEAC, confirming that meetings are not open to the public. Issue is not about confidentiality.
  - “Nothing about us without us”, - Louise Belisle. Any policies about students with disabilities requires that SEAC be advised and around the table
- It seems like some instances where the topic is on IEP (and relevant to SEAC mandate) and some are more teacher workload
  - What raised interest and concern was that teachers are not meant to be drafting IEPs alone, but no mention of parent involvement was discussed.
- Policy discussions have typically been about teacher workload in the implementation of an IEP, and establishing a common understanding of policy.
- EPC minutes reflect that SEAC was consulted and SEAC is not aware that this occurred. The Chair asked Lisa Falasconi for further clarification on what was noted in these minutes
- Proposal: amendment to Resolution: in any Committees of Council meetings ...where the interests... (bold the **and** at the end of the resolution).
- Resolution is intended to ensure that Council upholds existing governance that allows for participation from any Commissioner in any committee
- Chair asked to close discussion and put the resolution to a vote.

#### **4. Parent Committee Representative report - Kathy Needham**

- 4.1. Put this to Procedures Committee in regards to notice of initial and upcoming PC meetings. next meeting is January 17th

#### **5. Reports to Governing Boards - Letitia Taylor**

- 5.1. It was discussed that reporting can be brought to Parents Committee by rep Kathy Needham. Parents Committee members can then report back to their respective Governing Boards. Kathy and Letitia to connect and coordinate for consistent reporting to Parents Committee and ultimately to all Governing Boards.

#### **6. Special Needs at WQSB – Lisa Falasconi**

- 6.1.1. Lisa presented on Special Needs in the WQSB. Updated slides will be shared with members following the meeting.

#### **7. Sub-committees**

- 7.1. Formation of sub-committees, each sub-committee must designate a spokesperson to report back to SEAC and externally.

Anyone interested in any of the committees should submit interest to the Chair and composition will then be confirmed. A form will be shared with the Committee which will include a description of each sub-committee and their activities.

**7.1.1. Procedures**

Mandate to include SEAC nomination process, SEAC AGM, internal rules of procedure, communications about various WQSB committees.

**7.1.2. Complaints Process / by-law 18**

Chair still intends to form this committee but mandate may shift with further details about Bill 9.

**7.1.3. Communications**

Responsible for website, SEAC calendar

**7.1.4. Events**

Any SEAC-sponsored event, communicating with Connexions, determining budget for events.

21/22-11 **Motion:** Add two additional sub-committees which includes Events and Complaints Process/Bylaw 18.

IT WAS MOVED by Letitia Taylor, seconded by Andrea Gage that the motion be approved.

**Carried**

**8. Update on Website – Meaghan Dufour and Letitia Taylor**

8.1. Follow up with the WQSB DG and Director of Complementary Services on December 7, 2021 around comments made at the November SEAC meeting. Positive outcomes:

- 8.1.1. Committee to put some disclaimers/caveats on the website. Any resources posted on the site will be shared with the Director of Complementary Services and if the WQSB endorses them they will be flagged on the website as having that endorsement. Communications committee will come up with a protocol for resources to be posted, which will be shared with SEAC members. Initial resources will include Connexions, Parent Cafes, etc.
- 8.1.2. Members were asked to indicate if they objected to having their name and represented school posted on the 'About Us' page. No contact information would be posted. Members should reach out to Letitia if there are any issues with this. Amy Taylor offered to list her name as contact to cover off for multiple schools in that territory that don't have SEAC representation.

- 8.1.3. There will be reciprocal links (Board to SEAC site) on the respective sites
- 8.1.4. Louise - proposed motion to address strategy for governing board/SEAC representation for kids learning online - suggest we discuss this next meeting. The way the online school is set up restricts SEAC from having influence on this. Kathy proposed that this be scoped to any scenario in which students are faced with online learning.

**Forward agenda item:** Online learning and role of SEAC

- 9. **Selection of future meeting dates and topics:** fourth Monday of every month from 6:30-8:30pm, with additional meeting in January to discuss budget
  - 9.1. January: Regular meeting on the 12th (discuss Bill 9, Report from all sub-committees (even if it's just confirming membership, Communications committee), Finance meeting on the 24th -
  - 9.2. February: February 23rd (will focus on Resource Allocation)- Lisa to confirm when the Resource Allocation Committee meeting falls to ensure this doesn't conflict
  - 9.3. March: March 28th
  - 9.4. April: April 25th
  - 9.5. May: May 18th

21/22-12 **Motion:** Extend meeting by 15 minutes.

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belisle , seconded by Letitia Taylor that the meeting be extended by 15 minutes.

**Carried**

- 10. **SEAC Budget (2021-22)** – Lisa Falasconi
  - 10.1. \$1000 annually, website costs will not be incurred until next year, so have full balance.
  - 10.2. In 2020, we didn't use any budget, so can possibly carry forward. Lisa Falasconi will confirm this with the Director of Finance.
  - 10.3. Louise suggested that \$200 be earmarked for rolling website costs. In light of this, this available budget (\$800) should be considered by the Events Sub-Committee.

**11. Varia**

**11.1.1. Global Financial Report**

With last year's resource allocation recommendations, there were some challenges learning about what recommendations were taken up for implementation. This is important information for

SEAC in formulating annual recommendations. Lisa committed to having more substantive feedback on the previous year's allocation to serve as a reference point for current year recommendations.

**21/22-13 Motion:** In addition to the usual global financial report, SEAC requests that the director of finance and director of complementary services prepare a quantitative and qualitative report outlining the outcome and effect of the WQSB resources allocation for last school year of 2020 – 2021.

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belisle , seconded by Letitia Taylor that the motion be passed.

**1 abstention, Carried**

Discussion:

- What's needed is a detailed report on expenditures related to special education, broken down by categories to understand allocation at a more granular level. Financial details (dollars, not just percentages) attached to each of the recommendations made.
- Lisa to share past year's report
- A detailed request to be submitted to Director, Finance (and Lisa) for the information in question (any resource expenditure pertinent to special needs students)
- Lisa needs to look into what information can be shared and in what form.
- Letitia suggested forwarding the motion and recommendations to Lisa to give to the Director of Finance. Any follow up questions can be directed to the Chair. SEAC can also provide context of Education Act for this request.
- SEAC is challenged in giving resource allocation advice without understanding past and current financial context.

## **12. IEP presentation and recording (Nov 8, 2021)**

12.1. Presentation was well attended. There was a low survey response rate to gauge participant views. Recording link and slides were disseminated following the session. The website also has IEP info with the recording and information. The presentation will also be posted to the SEAC site.

### **12.2. Format of future presentations**

**Table for future meeting.** Chair wants to discuss making sure we're providing paper copies in advance, recording some of the presentations that Lisa does during meetings and making them available as a resource.

## **13. Adjournment**

21/22-14 **Motion** to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED by Letitia Taylor, seconded by Andrea Gage that the meeting be adjourned at 9:02pm.

**Carried**

