

Minutes of the WQSB **Special Education Advisory Committee** meeting held on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 held via virtual platform (Teams), at 6:36 pm.

**PRESENT:**

**Members:**

Louise Belisle, Meaghan Dufour (Chair), Jessica Fortier (Vice-Chair), Iris Kiewlet, Kimberly Kourtsidis, , Kathy Needham (Parent Committee Rep), Bryan Poirier, Andrea Smith, Letitia Taylor (EHDAA Parent Commissioner), Andrea Gage (Management Rep), Kathlene Vibert (Teacher Rep) , Olivia Hazim, Amy Taylor, Natalie Filiou,

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

**Regrets:** Sharon Pinkston, Karenne Lachapelle, Dana Scott, Scott Laporte, Cathy Girard (Support Staff Rep), Cindy Smith (Professional Rep)

**1. Approval of Agenda**

21/22-16 Adoption of the Amended Agenda

IT WAS MOVED by Amy Taylor seconded by Letitia Taylor that the Agenda be approved with amendments.

**Carried**

The following additional agenda items were proposed:

- Address topics/agenda for future meetings
- Implementation of Education Act
- Advice to Admin (procedure and subject matter)
- Review of secretary role and dissemination of meeting materials (item 11)

**2. Approval of Minutes**

21/22-17 Approval of Minutes was moved as a forward to the January 27, 2022 meeting.

IT WAS MOVED by Letitia Taylor, seconded by Kim Kourtsidis that the November 15, 2021 meeting Minutes be approved.

**Carried**

**3. Reports**

3.1. EHDAA Commissioner report - Letitia Taylor

- 3.1.1. The position for the Chair of Council elected separately from ward members and parent commissioners. Alain Guy (former chair) has resigned and an election is scheduled for February 20, 2022. If more than one submissions is received by Sunday, January 16th, then the position will be acclaimed. Letitia encouraged SEAC

members to be informed on candidates and their positions with respect to special needs and be active in asking questions and voting.

- 3.1.2. Two grade 11 students with IEPs from Philemon Wright elected as student representatives and were excellent and engaged student ambassadors.

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

- 4.1. No updates, agenda for next meeting coming out January 13.
- 4.2. Kathy inquired about any agenda items SEAC members would like to see added. Letitia suggested we prompt a discussion on parent/child support for online learning. Letitia also suggested this topic be included as a forward agenda item for SEAC. SEAC will pull together some recommendations (resources for website, suggestions for inclusion in IEP) to be shared and discussed with the Parents Committee.

#### **5. Subcommittee Membership**

- 5.1. There was some response to call for sub-committee membership
  - 5.1.1. Procedures - 4 people
  - 5.1.2. Complaints - 4 people
  - 5.1.3. Communications - 4 people
  - 5.1.4. Events - 4 people
- 5.2. The Chair encouraged more SEAC members to reach out to give membership in one of the sub-committees a try. She will pull together a final list and send out an email to each individual committee confirming details by January 15th for those sub-committees who want to meet prior to the full SEAC meeting. Each sub-committee should designate a spokesperson.

#### **6. Address Topics for Upcoming SEAC Meetings**

- 6.1. January 24th was intended to be a budget meeting but now has to be rescheduled due to a meeting conflict. January 26th at 6:30pm proposed as the date for the rescheduled meeting.
- 6.2. Latitia reminded the Chair that a request was made in the past to get some data regarding uptake of previous resource allocation recommendations well in advance of the meeting on the 26th in order to formulate informed input for the budget discussion. Lisa has asked the Financial Director for data to inform SEAC's budget discussion. The Director had a couple of potential sample reports that may be informative, but will need to validate in advance that this is what SEAC is looking for.

The Chair and several members will review and confirm this in advance of the 26th. The Committee is seeking data on budget allocation from last year and proposed allocation for this year. Lisa indicated that the data will not be available until the 17th at the earliest. The Chair suggested that SEAC go ahead with the presentation on the 26th, but plan to review the reports and financials at the February 23rd SEAC meeting. Letitia indicated that the info we're looking for is not at the level of an audit but more at the level of program analysis.

- 6.3. Members indicated an interest in learning more about the resources that are provided to teachers in the development of IEPs. This would provide parents with more context to understand how teachers are guided in constructing their IEPs.
- 6.4. Suggested meeting topics:
  - 6.4.1. January 26th: budget presentation, Transitions (awareness and support)
  - 6.4.2. February 23rd: budget analysis and resource allocation
  - 6.4.3. March 28: Presentation to SEAC on IEP process and Parent role in IEP implementation process (timing for this discussion should happen such that it enables parents to inform development of IEPs crafted in May/June)
  - 6.4.4. April 25: Student confidentiality (files), recommendations for online learning (for students and parent support)
  - 6.4.5. May 18: To be confirmed
- 6.5. Can we create a document repository for all SEAC documentation to improve access to Committee documentation.
  - 6.5.1. Louise suggested creating a shared Google folder. Andrea G suggested using a secure platform that the Board is familiar with (Microsoft). The Communications Committee will explore options and get back to the full Committee
- 6.6. Costing for SEAC website proposed for a future meeting date.

## **7. Implementation of Education Act sections 96.14 and 250 (info and discussion) - Letitia Taylor**

- 7.1. Section 4: Periodic evaluation of IEP and . Can the School Board confirm that there is a regular touch base by teachers to parents to confirm status of a student's progress against IEP goals. Is there a formal system in place (elementary or secondary) and how can we fill the gap between statutory requirements (as per the Act) and what parents are experiencing.
- 7.2. Andrea Gage confirmed that teachers are meant to communicate once a month on progress against IEP goals, typically a phone call or email. Letitia suggested that this doesn't seem to be the case in many other schools and asked Lisa how we could fill this gap for schools where this doesn't seem to happen. Lisa clarified that it is not an evaluation but a communication on progress, falling into the category of a phone call or email. It's an ongoing discussion to bridge that gap across all schools

where there are inconsistencies in how “communication” is interpreted. IEP will only go home once or twice a year but communication should happen every month. Members suggested there be clarification around ‘Communication’ expectation such that school/teachers initiate monthly communication and adapt to the mode that parents find most conducive to their needs (email, call, zoom, etc) to understand and support their child. This would improve consistency in how this expectation is implemented. Lisa referred to the School Board documentation that addresses this specifically. Other members mentioned their experience with inconsistency around delivering on this expectation. Another member asked how teachers are involving students in this regular progress communication process. Lisa agreed that this is an area that requires more attention on the part of teachers.

- 7.3. Kathy asked whether a revised IEP in November should be re-signed and provided to parents shortly thereafter. Lisa confirmed that a revised copy should be made available to parents. Letitia provided advice that if in an unresponsive environment (particularly in secondary level), prepare to be forward leaning/proactive, document everything, and move up the chain of command if things are not satisfactorily addressed.

## **8. Advice to Administration (procedure and subject matter) - Letitia Taylor**

- 8.1. SEAC as a committee has to be more formal and precise about the Committee’s advice and recommendation to the Board. From a collective parent perspective, demanding what we would like to see, in writing as formal advice/request to reinforce that this is a collective recommendation not individual advocacy of one parent. Letitia suggests that if this effort doesn’t fall under the mandate of an existing sub-committee, we should discuss this further in January to establish this function within the committee.

## **9. Changes and Online Transition of IEP form - Letitia**

- 9.1. Letitia was looking for an update and assurance from Lisa on how changes to the online IEP form will maintain accessibility/usability and to understand when SEAC will be consulted on any changes to the form. Lisa explained that implementation of the online IEP through Mosaik, ISM (the program where the IEP is held) will be gone as of June 2022. Lisa met with them to understand how this would impact their form. They would not be ready to implement the IEP for 22/23, so those IEPs written this spring (for 22-23 school year) will be written in the same format. **Forward agenda item:** Letitia proposed SEAC revisit this topic. Letitia will formulate potential input for how parents can have more input in this process.

10. Policy C-17 overview – Lisa Falasconi

- 10.1. Lisa indicated that a presentation isn't necessarily needed. She asked if SEAC members would be satisfied with information provided in handouts. It's intended to give a flavour of implementation. Members can review the powerpoint and have discussion at a future meeting. When Lisa does the presentation at future meetings she can integrate the policy into those discussions.

**21/22-18 Motion: Move agenda items 10 and 12 to the forward agenda**

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

**Carried**

**11. Adjournment**

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

**IT WAS MOVED by Louise, seconded by Dana Scott that the meeting be adjourned at 8:38pm.**

**Carried**