

Minutes of the WQSB **Special Education Advisory Committee** meeting held on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 held via virtual platform (Teams), at 6:39 pm.

PRESENT:

Members:

Louise Belisle, Sonya Driscoll, Meaghan Dufour (Chair), Jessica Fortier (Vice-Chair), Andrea Gage (Management Rep), Sarah Harris, Olivia Hazim, Iris Kiewlet, Karenne Lachapelle, Kathy Needham (Parent Committee Rep), Sharon Pinkston, Bryan Poirier, Dana Scott, Andrea Smith (Secretary), Cindy Smith (Professional Rep), Letitia Taylor (EHDA Parent Commissioner), Kathlene Vibert (Teacher Rep)

Observers: Lisa Falasconi (DG Rep)

Regrets: Natalie Filiou, Cathy Girard (Support Staff Rep), Amy Taylor

1. Reading of Land Acknowledgement - Read by Jessica Fortier

2. Approval of Agenda

21/22-28 Adoption of the Amended Agenda

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

Carried

The following additional agenda items were proposed:

- Table item 4.1 to allow for time to introduce an update and motion from the Communications and Policy and Procedures Subcommittees
- Transitions to secondary should be moved up on the agenda to inform the RAC discussion
- Under Varia:
 - revisit subcommittee membership
 - revisit SEAC meeting timing and length

3. Approval of Minutes

21/22-29 Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED by Kathy Needham seconded by Jessica Fortier that the January 26, 2022 meeting minutes be approved with adjustments made to the numbering of items and motions

Carried

4. Reports

4.1. Communications Committee Report - Letitia Taylor

4.1.1. Subcommittee membership to be posted to SEAC minutes and website. Chair to provide the list of confirmed members to the Secretary.

- 4.1.2. Communications Subcommittee met and generated some additional ideas for web resources (list shared by Letitia Taylor). It was also proposed that an explanation and disclaimer accompany the list posted to the SEAC website.

21/22-30 Motion - Addition of Resources to SEAC website

IT WAS MOVED that the resources listed by the Communications Subcommittee be posted to the SEAC website with the proposed disclaimer. Moved by Louise Belfour and Jessica Fortier seconded.

Carried

- 4.1.3. Changes proposed for the Policy and Procedure Handbook included:
- “Frequency of meetings changed to “The first meeting of SEAC will be called within ten (10) business days of the Parent Committee’s designation of the members of SEAC.”
 - “At the first meeting of SEAC, the meeting schedule for the year may be set.”
 - Remove mention of meeting frequency happening bimonthly

21/22-31 Motion - Changes to the Policy and Procedure Handbook

IT WAS MOVED that the revisions proposed be made to the Policy and Procedures Handbook. Moved by Letitia Taylor and Jessica Fortier seconded.

Carried

Discussion:

- Chair is a one year term. It’s helpful to have the Chair from the preceding year attend the first meeting of the year to ensure a smoother hand off. The subcommittee will take this suggestion into account for the next subcommittee meeting in exploring revisions to other sections of the Handbook.
- e-vote process - do we agree that if the Chair is not available to green light an e-vote that the Vice Chair is able to push forward the e-vote. There was general agreement from the Committee.
- It was also requested that the Vice Chair also be copied on all correspondence with the Board. There was general agreement from the Committee.

5. Parent Committee Representative report - Kathy Needham

- 5.1. A presentation was given by ARC, a group promoting anti-racism, community building group. ARC’s objective is to raise awareness of racial diversity and anti-colonial/racist pedagogy, improve relationships within the Board, and to be committed to eliminating racial discrimination in the

Board. SEAC may wish to have ARC present to the committee. No decision made.

- 5.2. The English Parent Committee Association (EPCA) has inquired about SEAC and its objectives. They have an upcoming meeting on March 16 and Kathy Needham suggested SEAC could provide a presentation. Louise encouraged Kathy to share the one pager from the SEAC website stating SEAC's goals. Kathy has already shared the link to the SEAC site with the committee, which sparked further interest from members. Louise further suggested that Kathy provide the Parents Committee with a short presentation on SEAC. It was suggested that Kathy get further clarification from EPCA about what they might be looking for regarding SEAC.
- 6. Transitions to Secondary - Lisa Falsconi and Letitia Taylor**
- 6.1. Transitions discussed in the questionnaire address all possible transitions (into/out of school, between levels/grades, between programs). The focus for this discussion was on transitions from grade 6-7, which entails a number of steps in moving from elementary to secondary. Lisa provided further context and detail for these steps.

A sample of a typical meeting note for a transition meeting was shared.

- 6.2. Questions from the Committee:
- 6.2.1. Is this a new process?
- No, it's a process that happens at most schools in the Board, with some schools (K-11) doing it somewhat differently
- 6.2.2. Does this process apply to students coming in from other Boards (e.g. French, Ontario)?
- Yes, if the student is coming in with IEP they will have an intake meeting to assess comparable supports coming into the Board
- 6.3. Why is this process not done to support transitions from year to year?
- 6.3.1. There are transition practices to support students from year to year, but it's felt that the elementary to secondary (grade 6 to 7) transition requires additional focus given shifts in teachers/principal, etc. Andrea Gauge indicated that in some schools the PD days just prior to the start of the school year are ideally used to enable meetings for students transitioning from year to year.
- 6.4. What is the order of transition practices?

- 6.4.1. Teachers meet initially to identify transition needs, spring IEP discussions (for IEP for following year) is when the parent is brought into the discussion.
- 6.5. Who participates in these discussions? And where and how can a parent input/object to the transition decision?
 - 6.5.1. Consultant takes notes from these meetings and files these with school. Some parents have already made teachers aware of some preferences, which is taken into account in these discussions.
- 6.6. Why aren't parents involved in the initial transition discussions (vetting, approval)? Privacy is paramount when it comes to transition notes and parent should have an opportunity to review them before they're shared further. Transition notes should not include role/involvement of parent.
- 6.7. Letitia Taylor raised several critical issues, noting that the objective of transition meetings and notes is to ensure that the programming, resources, teacher and administrative support is in place to help a child succeed. Nothing that does not address this goal should be included in the transition notes. Parents should be seen as the through-line, the consistency in the lifecycle of our students' school experience. Parents should not assume that incoming teachers have read and/or understand red files and the implications of what is within the notes or IEP. There should be no process/practice that parents don't have line-of-sight on. Parents should have a copy of the transition notes for their child. This can also help parents ensure there are no factual errors within the notes.

21/22-32 Motion - Extend the meeting to 9pm

IT WAS MOVED that the meeting be extended to 9pm. Moved by Louise Desjardins and Bryan Poirier seconded.

Carried with 3 Objections

7. Allocation and Distribution of Funding for Students with Special Needs

21/22-33 Motion - Request extension for SEAC input

IT WAS MOVED by Jessica Fortier, seconded by Louise Belisle, that the SEAC Chair (Meaghan Dufour) will contact the RAC Chair (Mike Dubeau) to ask that SEAC be allowed to submit its input by March 11th, and that a SEAC meeting to discuss potential input be set for March 7th at 6:30pm.

Carried

Discussion:

- Insufficient time / members remaining this evening to draft recommendations for the Resource Allocation Committee (RAC).

- SEAC members are asked to review the template provided by the RAC and think through potential input in advance of a March 7th SEAC meeting.
- It will be important that individual SEAC members do not fill out and submit the RAC template on-line. A single form will be submitted by SEAC after the March 7th discussion.
- The next RAC meeting will be held on March 8th.

8. Adjournment

21/22-32 Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belisle, seconded by Jessica Fortier that the meeting be adjourned at 8:55pm.

Carried