

Minutes of the WQSB **Special Education Advisory Committee** meeting held on Monday, March 28, 2022 held via virtual platform (Teams), at 6:36 pm.

PRESENT:

Members:

Louise Belisle, Sonya Driscoll, Meaghan Dufour (Chair), Jessica Fortier (Vice-Chair), Sarah Harris, Karenne Lachapelle, Kathy Needham (Parent Committee Rep), Sharon Pinkston, Bryan Poirier, Dana Scott, Andrea Smith (Secretary), Letitia Taylor (EHDA Parent Commissioner), Kathlene Vibert (Teacher Rep), Cathy Girard (Support Staff Rep), Amy Taylor

Observers: Lisa Falasconi (DG Rep)

Regrets: Natalie Filiou, Andrea Gage (Management Rep), Olivia Hazim, Iris Kiewlet, Cindy Smith (Professional Rep)

1. **Reading of Land Acknowledgement** - Read by Meaghan Dufour

2. **Approval of Agenda**

21/22-33 Adoption of the Agenda

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

Carried

The following additional agenda items were proposed:

- Addition of a welcome to new members - it was subsequently noted that the new members weren't present for the meeting, so the welcome item was removed
- Addition of the two remaining sub-committees for update

3. **Approval of Minutes**

21/22-34 Approval of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED by Amy Taylor seconded by Jessica Fortier that the February 23, 2022 meeting minutes be approved with no changes indicated.

Carried

4. **Membership Updates**

4.1. Meaghan Dufour will be stepping down as Chair but intends to remain as a member of SEAC. The Vice Chair, Jessica Fortier, declined the offer to accept the Chair role. A vote is required to replace the Chair.

4.1.1. Scheduling an election - the Chair proposed holding an election at the end of today's meeting or holding it by email. Lisa Falasconi suggested we move to hold an election followed by discussion to confirm when it will take place

21/22-35 Motion to Hold an Election Tonight to Replace Chair

IT WAS MOVED by Jessica Fortier seconded by Letitia Taylor to hold an election at tonight's meeting to elect a new SEAC Chair.

Carried

- Letitia was nominated by Jessica Fortier, Letitia accepted
- No other nominations were offered for Chair
- Letitia Taylor was named as the new Chair by acclamation

5. EHDA Commissioner report - Letitia Taylor

5.1. Letitia flagged several items of concern of note to SEAC members:

5.1.1. In reading the minutes of the EPC it was revealed that contradictory information has been communicated to various stakeholders in the system around an issue that is crucially important. That is the quality and quantity of IEP communications with parents. SEAC had discussed this matter previously and the Director of Complementary Services (DCS) affirmed that grade reports do not constitute a communication in the sense intended by the E.A.; the Director of Elementary Education affirmed in the Educational Policies Committee meeting that they did count toward the 10 required communications. Also, in that meeting, the union made the same observations that SEAC had made in our meeting with regard to inconsistency of practice from school to school. At the January meeting, Letitia suggested that she, the Chair, Vice-Chair, and the DCS meet to discuss getting a clear understanding and agreement between SEAC and the Administration, as well as possible avenues for communication to stakeholders, and then report back to SEAC as a whole. Regrettably, they have not yet met to strategize about and arrange to communicate our needs and perspective on this issue. but will make this a priority, as the new SEAC Chair.

5.1.2. It was also shared in January that there seemed to be quite a bit of information about various activities and initiatives around special education and IEPs in the system at the moment. However, a consistent feature of all this activity is that the parent stakeholder perspective is missing. Letitia had made a point in Council to urge the Administration to reconsider this approach and would like the DCS to address this fact and share with SEAC how she proposes to start to respond to that lack of consultation and awareness this year. Letitia would also like to recommend that the Parent Committee (PC) Rep bring this issue forward at the next PC meeting.

5.1.3. The final issue raised is with regard to the communication from the Director of Human Resources (DHR) about expectations for online

learning; his letter to the school level administration and my letter in reply were included in the supporting documents for tonight's meeting. Letitia received an email in response to her letter which indicated that the DHR, who also serves as the Director of Secondary Education (DSE), would be interested in receiving feedback from SEAC and the PC about our observations, perspectives and experiences of online learning over the last two years. Letitia proposes a short term ad hoc sub-committee to solicit and compile information from stakeholders around the SEAC table in order to respond to this open door for input. We could draft and send a survey to members of SEAC and perhaps also collaborate with the Parent Committee to gather insights about best practices, what went well and what could be improved in our view.

21/22-36 Motion to strike an ad hoc subcommittee of SEAC

IT WAS MOVED by Meaghan Dufour seconded by Jessica Fortier that SEAC strike an ad hoc subcommittee to gather feedback from WQSB parent stakeholders and members of SEAC about the online learning experience of their students and families and to draft a report to be shared with, among others, the WQSB Administration and Council of Commissioners. The Parent Committee should be informed and invited to collaborate on the project.

4 abstentions, Carried

Discussion:

- Lisa requested clarification as to whether the issues pertain to code of conduct. Letitia outlined that the correspondence was moreso related to communications and expectations from the Board to students and their families.
- Andrea S asked for scope of the consultation and Letitia clarified that a SEAC sub-committee would scope consultation efforts to the SEAC stakeholders of parents and students, while recommending to Parents Committee that a broader consultation with respect to the online experience be taken.
- Letitia will send out an email to SEAC members to determine who may be interested in joining the subcommittee.

6. Parent Committee Representative report– Kathy Needham

6.1. Parents Committee (PC) were told that the EPEC newsletter will have an article on Bullying and Harassment on March 30. Since there was time for discussion at the PC meeting, Kathy had the opportunity to ask what was happening in WQSB in relation to bullying and harassment prevention. In particular, she inquired about the Oleweus program. This was something implemented years ago by some schools. Schools are required to review and update their bullying plan but it was unknown whether schools get

refreshed on that training. Typically, it is up to the schools to decide how staff are trained particularly in regards to how attendants and non-teacher support staff get trained. Lastly, Kathy made it known that bullying is a big concern for parents with special needs and that special needs students should be incorporated into the school planning. She encouraged the members to contact her if they would like SEAC's assistance on how to include information from a special needs perspective.

6.2. The Parent Committee Budget will be the topic at the next meeting.

Forward agenda item: Request information from administration with respect to data collection on bullying and violence involving kids with special needs. Request that the Director of Complimentary Services report back on this information at the next meeting.

7. Subcommittee reports

7.1. Communications

- 7.1.1. Website and budget - Louise would like to make a motion to ensure that the website costs are always paid one year in advance. This ensures a better deal and contract with the website provider, GoDaddy.

21/22-36 Motion: Website contract

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belfour, and seconded by Kathy Needham that the Communications subcommittee proceed with securing a 2 year contract for web services not to exceed \$600.

Carried

Discussion:

- Bryan asked if we foresee having any difficulty paying for the website out of our regular budget (\$1000/yr) going forward? Letitita indicated that this hasn't been an issue to date.
- Lisa flagged that invoices must be received by May of every year to ensure timely coverage of costs by the Board.

7.2. Policies and Procedures Subcommittee:

- 7.2.1. Changes shared with SEAC regarding website information to be added to the handbook including ongoing resourcing, online comments, contributors.
- 7.2.2. E-vote procedure - the sub-committee suggests a clarification and structuring of the e-vote procedure, including timely confirmation of the outcome of the e-vote with SEAC members, with ratification taking place at the next SEAC meeting.
- 7.2.3. Secretary Role: discussion around how to reduce the number of emails with meeting materials going out to committee members. A suggestion was put forward to copy the whole committee once draft minutes are completed rather than channeling via the Chair

and Vice Chair. Lisa has created a shared drive in Google to share meeting documentation.

21/22-37 Motion - Changes to the Policy and Procedure Handbook

IT WAS MOVED that the revisions proposed regarding the website, e-vote procedure, and secretary role be made to the Policy and Procedures Handbook. Moved by Louise Belfour and Andrea Smith seconded.

Carried

7.3. Events Subcommittee: the subcommittee has met twice to brainstorm several options and propose an event with 3-4 speakers in mid-May on a variety of topics, pending confirmation of speakers.

7.3.1. The proposed agenda is included in the subcommittee report appended to these minutes.

Discussion:

- Who's being targeted? Louise clarified that it should be for everyone
- Kathy asked if any of the proposed presenters has experience with kids with special needs. Some do but speakers have not yet been confirmed
- Amy Taylor cautioned about Zoom fatigue and effort spent with potentially limited demand. Letitia suggested considering hybrid options. The sub-committee would need to check on this with the Board.
- The Chair requested if it would be possible to have an e-vote on the substance of the motion.
- Kathy flagged that 4 presenters seems like a lot for a 1.5 hour session. Louise clarified the intention to have 15 minutes per presenter with 5 minutes each for Q&A.

21/22-38 Motion: Scheduling of an event

IT WAS MOVED by Louise Belisle, Meaghan Dufour seconded to organize a 1.5 hour event in mid-May for 1.5 hours with 3-4 presenters, with a budget not to exceed \$400, with topics to be confirmed with the speakers.

3 objections, Carried

8. SEAC recommendation to RAC

8.1. Ratification of the motion completed through e-vote

8.1.1. What was the outcome of the e-vote? 11 emails were sent to approve the e-vote motion.

8.1.2. SEAC ratified the motion completed through e-vote.

8.1.3. The Chair, Meaghan Dufour, did not yet submit the PDF to the Board. The newly established Chair, Letitia, will follow-up with Lisa Falasconi and the Board regarding submission of SEAC's recommendations.

9. Individualized Education Plans

9.1. This item was not discussed and was noted as a forward agenda item

10. Varia

10.1. Subcommittee membership

10.1.1. The chair indicated that this topic could be addressed offline.

10.1.2. A list of sub-committee members was previously requested and is included here in the minutes:

1. Events: Louise Belisle, Andrea Gage, Sharon Pinkston
2. Communications: Kathy Needham, Louis Belisle, Natalie Filiou, Letitia Taylor
3. Policies and Procedures: Letitia Taylor, Jessica Fortier, Louise Belisle, Kathy Needham
4. By-law 18/Complaints: Meaghan Dufour, Bryan Poirier, Letitia Taylor

10.2. Meeting schedule

10.2.1. The Chair flagged that this is a **forward agenda item** of importance.

10.2.2. The Chair will provide structured time allocation for future agenda items. The Chair also requested that SEAC members forward additional ideas for streamlining and structuring SEAC meetings to the Chair for implementation. Where there is a decision item then an e-vote can be taken.

11. Date of next meetings

11.1. April 25th, 6:30pm

11.2. May 18th, 6:30pm

12. Adjournment

21/22-39 Motion to Adjourn

IT WAS MOVED by Meaghan Dufour, seconded by Amy Scott that the meeting be adjourned at 8:40pm.

Carried

Mar 9, 2022 (phone conference)
SEAC – Events meeting summary

Brain storming

- Asking to have event mid May (1hr 30 mins)
- 4 professionals with 15 min each (presentation and then Q&A)
- Topics for event
 - To have professionals speak on
 - Well-being
 - Methods / strategies
 - Recognizing
 - Resources
 - Self advocating
 - Vulnerabilities/safety/
 - Harassment/bullying
 - Reporting
 - IEP knowledge
 - Learning disability (John see attached email by Kathy)
 - Speech / physical / emotional therapy
 - Quebec city – presenter (Kristina Findlay) (topic forthcoming) is confirmed for sure dates to be provided (Bio forthcoming)
 - Therapist – presenter – bullying, cyber, online safety, future
 - Mental health & anxiety she can present on confirmed (TBD) 1week in May
 - Social workers and community
 - How to talk to your children about sensitive subjects
 - On behaviours and positive disciplining
 - Vulnerabilities/safety/inclusion
 - By standard training
 - Awareness in school with all children
 - Counselors with different messages in assisting children
 - Presenter (Lisa Jones)- Utah –
 - bullying, cyber, online safety, future
 - How to talk to your children about sensitive subjects
 - On behaviours and disciplining (modifications)
 - Violence (reporting/prevention)
 - By standard training
 - Awareness in school with all children
 - Some resources

- La Resource (outreach) Received email and is happy to assist just provide date.
 - How they process assessments
 - Waiting times
 - And what they offer
- Speech therapist
 - Homework
 - Obtaining a therapist (what to look for and how to obtain one)
 - Assessments (costs and what it contains and can get a summary of limitations without sharing the entire report)

The above are topics and the presenters may touch on some of the bullet points as they go.

Andrea Gage will be checking to see if any of her contacts can fill spots above.

Update meeting - Telephone conference – Mar 22, 2022

- Update on resources & events
 - Exact date to be selected Thurs, May 5, 2022
 - Exact presentations (need to be sent to us before hand) From selections above
 - Select the volunteers & tasks Send out email / solicit for volunteers
- Action items
 - Sharon to provide update on presenters (see above for updates)
 - Louise to set up event with using board Teams / zoom??? (in person)
 - Action Sharon to request in person if possible with zoom
 - Louise to send George Singfields email to Sharon re request for in person conference
 - Agenda to be completed
 - Registration
 - Website / advertising
 - Volunteers
 - Survey (electronic)
 - In person / zoom
 - This would be for some and zoom could be at the WQSB.

Please add to ideas or where I have missed.

Louise

**DRAFT /TENATIVE
AGENDA**

May 5, Thursday @6:30 pm – 8 p.m.

- | | | |
|------|---|--------|
| 6:00 | Testing | 15 |
| 6:15 | Admitting | 15min |
| 6:30 | Intro (speak on all 4 presenters (just a quick bio)
small bio from each | 10 min |
| 6:40 | 1 st presenter (we introduce) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Topic○ Q&As Moderating of Q&As | |
| 7:00 | 2nd presenter (we introduce) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Topic○ Q&As Moderating of Q&As | |
| 7:20 | 3rd presenter (we introduce) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Topic○ Q&As Moderating of Q&As | |
| 7:40 | 4th presenter (we introduce) <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Topic○ Q&As Moderating of Q&As | |
| 8:00 | closing / survey | |