



**SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
Special Education Advisory Committee**

February 16, 2021 @ 3:00 pm

**Videoconference Sites:**

*Due to Covid-19, SGDSB will conduct their SEAC meetings virtually until further notice. Videoconference sites will be unavailable. Please contact the board office to receive the electronic invitation/link to the meeting.*

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**Minutes**

<b>Voting Members (4/7)</b>	<b>OS</b>	<b>TC</b>	<b>VC</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>
MCINTYRE, Margaret: <i>Trustee (Chair)</i>			X		
MANNISTO, Mark: <i>Trustee (Vice-Chair)</i>			X		
CORMIER, Paul: <i>First Nation Trustee</i>					X
BEAULIEU, Nicole: <i>North of Superior Counseling Programs (NOSP)</i>				X	
BRAKE-WELDON, Brandy: <i>Dilico</i>			X		
AUDIA, Jessica: <i>Superior Greenstone Association for Community Living</i>			X		
DAVIES, Candace: <i>North of Superior Programs (NOSP-Alternate)</i>					X
MOORE, Jennifer <i>Dilico (Alternate)</i>					X
GROENEVELD, Sharon: <i>Superior Greenstone Association for Community Living (Alternate)</i>					X
ZAPPITELLI, Sheila: <i>Superior Greenstone Association for Community Living (Alternate)</i>					X
<i>Member vacancy</i>					
NESBITT, Jason: <i>Trustee (Alternate)</i>					X
MAJOR, Christine: <i>Trustee (Alternate)</i>					X
PELLETIER, Allison: <i>Trustee (Alternate)</i>					X

<b>Resource Members</b>	<b>OS</b>	<b>TC</b>	<b>VC</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>
McRAE, Pinky: <i>Board Chair (Ex-Officio)</i>					X
MORDEN CORMIER, Nicole: <i>Director of Education</i>			X		
GOODMAN, Will: <i>Superintendent of Education</i>			X		
COUTURE, Erin: <i>Student Trustee</i>					X
SCHWANTZ, Sydney: <i>Student Trustee</i>					X
RENAUD, Deana: <i>Mental Health Manager</i>			X		
BIANCO, Melissa: <i>Positive Behaviour Support Consultant</i>			X		
CURTIS, Sara: <i>Principal, Terrace Bay and Schreiber Public School</i>			X		
BREWSTER, Annick: <i>Principal, SGDSB Virtual Secondary School &amp; Continuing Education</i>			X		
NICOL VELLA, Janice: <i>Secretary</i>			X		

*Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)*

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Call to Order:</b>	at 3:04 by Chair, M. McIntyre
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Approval of Minutes from January 12, 2021:</b>	
	Motion to approve minutes made by M. Mannisto	

	Seconded by J. Audia	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Additions to the Agenda:</b>	
	M. McIntyre provided the committee with a land acknowledgement prior to commencing with the agenda.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Business Arising from Minutes:</b>	
	<b>4.1</b> Spec ed document review: 'The Parents' Guide to Special Education' and 'Parents' Guide to Special Education Appeals, Support Organizations and Contacts'	Annick Brewster
	We have cleaned up errors and language in both documents and are looking to incorporate P.Cormier's additions. No other comments/questions.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Agenda Items:</b>	<b>Host</b>
	<b>5.1</b> Professional Development Day – Educational Assistants	Melissa Bianco
	<p>EA PD was held on January 29<sup>th</sup> with several new EA's participating virtually with 63 in total with participants noting a strong team approach in student support and they are excited to continue with additional learning opportunities.</p> <p>A question was asked if by great attendance, it means the majority of EA's attended? M. Bianco confirmed that to best of her knowledge all EA's were there virtually. To this, N. Morden-Cormier added that staff are becoming increasingly comfortable with technology and that comments have been made from staff to reduce travel in the future and engage in tech options more; the conversation was very insightful into the amount of travel required of our staff.</p> <p>This led to a discussion related to SEAC and the requirement for face-to-face meetings and if on-line options could be available in the future through an application to ministry, with N. Morden-Cormier indicating that if this was the will of SEAC in northern communities this could be something to look at further.</p> <p>Committee members were in favour of such an approach, with the following comments being made around using tech more, and eventually advocating for the continuation of virtual SEAC meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-virtual meetings facilitates attendance/participation of our committee and community members</li> <li>-now that we've learned it can we continue to reduce the stress of traveling the distances our board has</li> <li>-stress of traveling extensive distances to be at meetings (especially within this board)</li> <li>-allows us to attend, makes life easier to commit (without travel time and distances, easier to be at the meetings)</li> <li>-fits schedules better, reduces driving risks</li> <li>-while having to use tech was 'forced' upon us (by pandemic), it has worked out well in this regard (reduced driving risks during winter months)</li> <li>-staff committee members are appreciative of the virtual options considering busy schedules, winter months, and would be in favour of virtual sessions, but appreciate some face-to-face as well</li> <li>-happy with the set up especially since we used to do face-to-face (involved travel to Marathon)</li> </ul> <p>N. Morden-Cormier added an important note that the current arrangement to meet virtually is in effect until Dec 2021, and that it may be best to prepare a letter for June or September, then continue advocacy for this within these timelines. It was suggested that we share with other school boards, especially since our chair, earlier in the year brought forward all these benefits that have been discussed today, forward. It was recognized that the acts and regulations that we work with were written in a different time in tech history, perhaps SGDSB can step out and advocate for this.</p> <p>After discussions around timelines (sending the letter in June vs September) and next steps it was agreed that this letter would be shared with provincial SEACs, that a letter would be prepared by N. Morden-Cormier for this SEACs May meeting, then for further vetting and distribution provincially via the appropriate channels.</p>	

	With all in agreement. N. Morden-Cormier will draft letter, vet through Will, then our chair and board chair for the May meeting.	
<b>5.2</b>	Spec ed document review: 'School to Community Transition Information'	Annick Brewster
A. Brewster asked if there were any changes and that any feedback would be appreciated. W. Goodman suggested that this document be brought to IEAC, with N. Morden-Cormier noting that she will add as an agenda item. In AES there are goals around transitions and many local first nations have agreed to self-governance, that multi-year plan requires voice of first nations partners, which can be vetted with community voices. A question was asked if feedback would be brought to the committee, and yes it would.		
<b>5.3</b>	Enhanced Autism Training Program – Ministry of Education Funding	Melissa Bianco
The Ministry of Education provided additional funding for kids with autism, and SGDSB received funds from Geneva Centre for Autism. This is a small pocket of money and we will find a way for it to be most impactful.		
<b>5.4</b>	After School Program Update – Music Program, Beginning Zones	Melissa Bianco
<p>M. Bianco previously spoke about after school programs being offered virtually, and we continue to plan a way to meet the needs of students. Shy-Anne Bartlett met with the team to review the results of the music program which has sparked passion with students and was creating relationships for participants with other GCHS students and others outside of school. For example, a non-verbal student was extremely excited to participate in drumming sessions, only required few prompts to stay engaged, is supported by family throughout this amazing experience.</p> <p>She also provided some information on beginning zones for K-3, which began on 20 Jan with 9 families registered. Teams are always checking in/engaging/connecting to see if their needs are being met.</p> <p>M. McIntyre commented that excited about the music program sounds exciting and was pleased to hear of student successes i.e. a student starting to participate with their peers.</p>		
<b>5.5</b>	Multi-Disciplinary Team Update	Sara Curtis
<p>S. Curtis reminded the committee of the PD sessions that have been offered and provided further information on hot-topic sessions that were initially started a few years ago (hot-topic sessions are short 1-hour long PD sessions with focused topics based on needs identified by school teams, or things being noticed within the district. The first session starts this week and focuses on the IEP audit process (done twice/year and one as school teams). This process asks: what areas are we doing well in, what can be enhanced via a new format.</p> <p>W. Goodman added that the audit is a great collection tool, informs of practices and programs that we implement. The idea to create an internal audit system came from external auditors, and he reiterated that it's a coaching document not a punitive piece, used to expand capacity of staff and has been a great tool.</p> <p>S. Curtis provided school team insight: the audit is taken, looked at, and things are prioritized to focus on in meetings or PD. Audits are scheduled until end of school year, with areas brought forward by school spec ed teams.</p> <p>W. Goodman noted that this links back to our strategic plan as it is used to help and monitor the strategic plan. N. Morden-Cormier added that it ties back to previous conversations on student's role/voice: is it working for them, and that it is important to draw that line/link.</p> <p>S. Curtis added that the hot topic for March is around transitions and April is student advocates/giving ownership of their own program.</p> <p>A comment was made that when IEP's first came out, boards received funding to do assessments, now that's gone, has staffing taken care of this in lieu of funding? S. Curtis replied that while staffing is a piece of information that is used to consider things like staffing levels, students with an IEP may not require additional supports beyond the classroom teacher. W. Goodman added that we go back to funding formulas for spec ed funding; staffing is determined by principals/greatest need whereas a</p>		

	school has so many staff allocated, and principals help determine where that support goes. The focus is student independence.	
	M. McIntyre closed the topic saying we always hear positive feedback on hot topics; great idea/good work.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Correspondence:</b>	<b>Host</b>
	6.1   Durham District School Board – On-line Learning Supports	Will Goodman
	<p>W. Goodman introduced this piece of correspondence that speaks to the concept of universal design, noting that, at a minimum we work hard in our district to ensure tech collaborates with design, and seek support; that this is an important letter as it speaks to providing unique opportunities for different entry points with various platforms and that he is very supportive of this letter and that, if desire of group, we could support it by sending onto our board. He added that this letter reflects practices that are good, has a positive tone, and indicates how resources can benefit students.</p> <p>M. McIntyre asked if there were any objections, hearing none, it was,</p> <p>Moved by M. Mannisto, seconded by J. Audia</p> <p>That the SGDSB SEAC supports the correspondence from Durham DSB SEAC and directs the administration to write a letter expressing our support.</p>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>New Business:</b>	<b>Host</b>
	<p>M. McIntyre expressed her wishes to develop a land acknowledgement for the SEAC meetings, feeling that it was important that we find the words to express our thanks; suggesting that with everyone in agreement, we write something up, work with trustee Cormier.</p> <p>N. Morden-Cormier suggested that his be done, then brought back to committee to construct wording reflecting our collective acknowledgement of the land with (for sense of ownership) enhancements/new ideas from our committee.</p> <p>W. Goodman suggested having Shy-Anne Bartlett come to a meeting and share the ‘why’ behind this then we can start working on it. It was reiterated that this is an important piece that we cannot impose and recognize that trustee Cormier is an important part of this process too.</p> <p>M. McIntyre noted an appreciation and better understanding/teaching would be a good direction, requesting that this be added to the agenda for the April meeting. All agreed.</p> <p>N. Morden-Cormier closed out this topic with comments of our appreciation of M. McIntyre, for her speaking from her heart at the beginning of this meeting and in her recognition of the land, and that was done today.</p>	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Information Items:</b>	<b>Host</b>
	Nil	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Agenda Items: Next meeting Date/Time/Venue:</b>	March 9, 2021 at 3 pm – Virtual Meeting
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Adjournment:</b>	3:54 p.m.
	Motion to adjourn made by J. Audia	
	Motion to adjourn seconded by M. Mannisto	