

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, January 7, 2010 @ 6:30 p.m.

Videoconference Sites:

Board Office, Marathon
 Geraldton Composite High School, Geraldton
 Lake Superior High School, Terrace Bay
 Manitouwadge High School, Manitouwadge
 Nipigon-Red Rock District High School, Red Rock

MINUTES

<u>Voting Members</u>	Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)										
	OS	TC	VC	A	R		OS	TC	VC	A	R
Audia, Jessica			X			Keenan, Darlene (Alternate)		X			
Brown, Cindy	X					Notwell, Kathy		X			
Simmons, Tina (Alternate)				X		Nelson, Theresa					X
Dupere, Cheryl					X	Tyance, Shirley			X		
<u>Resource Members</u>	Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)										
							OS	TC	VC	A	R
Pella, Patti: Director of Education											X
Tamblyn, David: Assistant to the Director of Education											X
Newton, Valerie: Superintendent of Student Success							X				
Hamill, Sherry: Special Education Board Lead								X			
Parsons, Don: Student Support Lead											X

1.0 Call to Order

Valerie Newton, Superintendent of Student Success called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Quorum for this meeting was achieved. In the absence of an elected chair for SEAC, Trustee Cindy Brown was acting chair.

2.0 Approval of Minutes

Attachment-May 14-09

Attachment – Nov 5-19

It was noted that several SEAC members could not open all their attachments. Therefore V. Newton read aloud the informational minutes of November 5, 2009. May 14, 2009 minutes were not recited as these were included with the December SEAC agenda.

Moved by: K. Notwell Second: J. Audia

✓ ***That, the Minutes of the May 14, 2009 be approved as presented, and***

✓ ***That, the Informational Minutes of November 5, 2009 be approved as presented.***

3.0 Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda

4.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Nomination and election of SEAC Chair

Acting chair, C. Brown called for nominations. With none forthcoming, C. Brown suggested that in the absence of an elected chair, the group consider having a rotating chair for the meetings. This was agreed to and further, SEAC member Jessica Audia agreed to chair the

meetings on occasion. In the meantime an e-mail will be circulated in an attempt to acquire someone in the group to stand for nomination as the SEAC Chair.

5.0 Correspondence

5.1 Kenora Catholic District School Board Attachment

V. Newton reviewed the letter in detail as the attachment could not be opened by all members. KCDSB 's letter is in of the Rainy River DSB, SEAC note to the minister that outlines concern about funding for psychological and speech/language assessment, Bill 29 and the proposed standard for Accessible Information and Communication.

5.2 Lakehead Public Schools Attachment

V. Newton reviewed the two letters in detail, as not all members could open the attachment. The letters written to Minister Wynne are from LDSB Chair Debra Massaro and LDSB SEAC Chair Susan Blekkenhorst, respectively and both pertain to the MOET School Information Finder section on its website. Essentially, they object to publication of what it perceives as judgmental and biased information about school communities, especially statistics illustrating the percentage of Special Needs Students in particular schools. LDSB has urged the ministry to remove the information about Special Education students suggesting that such information is detrimental because it implies to the public, that schools with large numbers of special education students may not be as good as a school with fewer numbers. SEAC members are inclined to support this issue, but wish to examine the School Information Finder site thoroughly on their own before committing that support in writing to the Minister.

5.3 OPSBA Attachment

V. Newton reviewed the letter from OPSBA's Communication and Policy section advising that OPSBA's Education Program Work Team is working in concert with the Ministry's Special Education branch to support and develop resources to assist SEAC groups' effectiveness with respect to communication, training and recruitment of members.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Review of Role and Responsibilities of SEAC - SEAC Information Booklet

V. Newton noted that the SEAC Information Booklet was revised as of January 5, 2010. She went over the booklet and encouraged the group to review its contents as it addresses the role of SEAC and its relationship with the board and schools. She outlined the SEAC role in school year budget preparations.

Bruce Rousseau, Superintendent of Business will attend the next SEAC meeting to provide an overview of the budget process and he will collect feedback from the group for the 2010-2011 budget planning process.

6.2 Counselling Services in Schools and Communities

V. Newton reported that both the elementary and secondary panels now have access to counseling services through the North of Superior Counselling Programs (NOSP). She encouraged members to direct parents to NOSP or to their school principal if they have questions about the services available.

6.3 Wait Time for Assessment

In response to an inquiry at the last meeting regarding what impact the end to the Ontario Psychological Association Assessment Funding Project may have of assessment wait time,

Sherry Hamill, Coordinator of Special Education polled SGDSB schools individually to determine wait time experiences. Her findings indicate that wait times vary widely from two weeks to one year. Last year in her school she waited eight months for one assessment, yet this year she's had two assessments done within a month's time. Speech assessments wait times in our schools ranged from six weeks, up to nine months. There is a backlog for services for children six year of age and under. CCAC seems to have the longest wait times. Occupational therapy services referrals range from one week to nine months, with the norm in Marathon being six to nine months. ISNC service times vary depending on the caseload as well as the involvement by the parent. In some cases, there are parents who may not even call the ISNC case manager to follow-up.

6.4 Autism Pilot Project

S. Hamill reported that funding of \$41,900 has been received to increase capacity and work with autistic students. Demonstration classes are being developed at Nipigon-Red Rock DHS as there is a higher number of students affected there. One class will run each day in second semester (February 1, 2010) with one classroom teacher.

The Thunder Bay Catholic DSB are the lead board for this for autism project and with extra funding, it has purchased a program and anticipate a placement of a SERT at NRHS by January 29. This SERT be a lead for board our and attend to the Northwestern Regional Consortium training, acting as our liaison and work with the NRHS classroom teacher.

Trustee C. Brown asked if a presentation could be made to SEAC at the end of the semester to gain some insight on the program success. S. Hamill follow-up on this request in the late spring.

6.5 "Education for All" Document and Training

S. Hamill explained that The Draft *Learning for All K-12* builds on the guiding principles outlined in *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6*. It is designed to share information with educators about educational approaches that have proved to be effective in supporting the learning of all students. SGDSB has been allocated \$10,000 to affect implementation of the program. The funding will be split between the elementary and secondary panels. Elementary principals will be taking it into schools tomorrow (January 8) and implementing through their professional learning communities. Secondary principals are set to get together in February (Semester II). To view the document go the website for the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) at <http://www.ontariodirectors.ca>

7.0 Future Agenda Items

- School Information Finder (see Item 5.2 above)
- 2010-2011 Budget Input (see Item 6.1 above)
- Presentation Autism Pilot Project (see 6.4 above)

8.0 Next Meeting Date/Time/Venue

The next meeting date will be Tuesday, February 9, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at Marathon Board Office-VC/TC.

9.0 Adjournment

Moved by: K. Notwell Second: S. Tyance

✓ **That, the SEAC Meeting be adjourned at 7:34 p.m.**

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, May 14, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.

Face-to-Face Meeting:
Board Office, Marathon

MINUTES

<u>Voting Members</u>	<i>Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)</i>										
	OS	TC	VC	A	R		OS	TC	VC	A	R
Audia, Jessica	X					Notwell, Kathy <i>(Alternate)</i>					X
Brown, Cindy <i>(Alternate)</i>	X					Nelson, Theresa	X				
Dupere, Cheryl	X					Simmons, Tina	X				
English, Jennifer					X	Souckey, Leslie <i>(Chair)</i>					X
Keenan, Darlene					X						

<u>Resource Members</u>	<i>Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)</i>				
	OS	TC	VC	A	R
Pella, Patti: <i>Director of Education</i>					X
Kappel, Colleen: <i>Superintendent of Education</i>	X				
Newton, Valerie: <i>Student Success Coordinator / Assistant to the Superintendent of Education</i>	X				
Parsons, Don: <i>Student Support Leader</i>	X				

1.0 Call to Order

In Leslie Souckey's absence, Trustee Cindy Brown, served as SEAC chair. The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. and roll call taken by Trustee Cindy Brown.

2.0 Approval of Minutes

✓ ***That, the Minutes of the March 4, 2009 be approved as presented.***

Moved by Trustee Tina Simmons. Seconded by Jessica Audia.

3.0 Additions to the Agenda

3.1 Elementary Staffing

4.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1 No new business.

5.0 Correspondence

- 5.1 Durham District School Board
- 5.2 Down Syndrome Association of Ontario
- 5.3 Views: Support for the Families of Blind and Visually Impaired Children
- 5.4 Halton Down Syndrome Association
- 5.5 Autism Ontario
- 5.6 Citizens with Disabilities – as per e-mail sent to all members April 1/09

- 5.7 Ontario Education Services – Accessibility Project
- 5.8 News from CWDO, April 2009
- 5.9 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- 5.10 Evidence of Effective High School Inclusion

6.0 New Business

6.1 Agency Updates

Theresa Nelson, Greenstone Social Services Office: Theresa presented a brief outline on the Triple P Parenting Program.

Jessica Audia, Superior Greenstone Association for Community Living: Jessica provided information by way of Bob Kerchuck regarding Community Living, APSW/Lutheran Services and the Community Care Survey. She also outlined dialogue with Wesway regarding camps for younger children.

6.2 Review of Board Budget

Bruce Rousseau outlined this year's budget for Special Education including Special Education Per Pupil Amount (SEPPA), High Needs Amount and Special Equipment Amount (SEA).

6.3 Special Education Board Plan

Colleen Kappel presented the amendments to the Special Education Board Plan.

6.4 Secondary Special Needs Students with Mental Illness – How is Progressive Discipline Adapted?

Theresa Nelson inquired about the above. Colleen Kappel and Val Newton presented various strategies and school processes that can assist with addressing concerns.

6.5 College Adult Education Programs

Val Newton provided a variety of information regarding College Access Programs with Northern College, ACE Confederation College Program and Summer Orientation Programs available to students.

6.6 Elementary Staffing

Colleen Kappel announced that elementary staffing for the 09-10 school year has increased by 1.75 F.T.E.

6.7 E.A. Staffing

The committee will be examining staffing proposals and well as other supports with regards to E.A. staffing.

6.7 Student Support Leadership Initiative

Don Parsons provided a brief outline of the SSL Initiative position to the members.

7.0 Information Items

7.1 Triple P Parenting Program

8.0 Next Meeting Date/Time/Venue

9.0 Adjournment

✓ **That**, the SEAC Meeting be adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Moved by Tina Simmons. Seconded by Jessica Audia.

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Special Education Advisory Committee

Thursday, November 5, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.

Video/Teleconference:
Lake Superior High School
Geraldton Composite High School
Manitouwadge High School
Nipigon-Red Rock District High School
Board Office, Marathon

INFORMATIONAL MINUTES

<u>Voting Members</u>	<i>Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)</i>										
	OS	TC	VC	A	R		OS	TC	VC	A	R
Audia, Jessica					X	Notwell, Kathie		X			
Brown, Cindy	X					Nelson, Theresa		X			
Dupere, Cheryl				X		Tyance, Shirley				X	
Keenan, Darlene		X									

<u>Resource Members</u>	<i>Attendance Mode: On-site (OS); Teleconference (TC); Videoconference (VC); Absent (A); Regrets (R)</i>				
	OS	TC	VC	A	R
Pella, Patti: <i>Director of Education</i>					X
Newton, Valerie: <i>Superintendent of Student Success</i>	X				
Hamill, Sherry: <i>Special Education Board Lead</i>		X			
Parsons, Don: <i>Student Support Leader</i>		X			

1.0 Call to Order

Due to the absence of a SEAC Chair, Trustee Cindy Brown, served as chair. The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. and roll call taken by Trustee Cindy Brown.

2.0 Approval of Minutes

As quorum had not been reached the minutes of May 14, 2009 could not be approved. This item has been deferred to the December meeting.

Due to lack of quorum this meeting is for informational purposes only.

3.0 Additions to the Agenda

3.1 No additions

4.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

4.1 No new business.

5.0 Correspondence

5.1 Leslie Souckey

Val Newton presented a letter from Leslie who has tendered her resignation as SEAC chair and as a member of the SEAC Committee, with regrets.

5.2 Rainy River District School Board

Val Newton presented a letter from the RRDSB to the Minister of Education responding in support to the points raised in a letter written by the Durham District School Board SEAC to John Wilhelm, Vice Chair of the Ministry's Advisory Council on Special Education.

5.3 Durham District School Board

Val Newton presented a letter from the DDSB SEAC written to John Wilhelm, Vice Chair of the Ministry's Advisory Council on Special Education, which addressed three points of concern:

- a) Funding for Psychological/Speech and Language Assessments: The Ontario Psychological Association Assessment Funding Project (OPA) ends in 2009/2010. It is anticipated that wait times, which are already lengthy, for assessment will increase significantly with the withdrawal of this funding.
- b) Bill 29 – Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act (Harassment and Violence), 2007
- c) Proposed Standards for Accessible Information and Communication

A decision upon writing a letter of support to the Ministry based on the Durham District School Board's SEAC letter is being deferred to the next meeting in order to gain additional information for the impact on the schools and students within our board, as well as to ensure we have quorum. Sherry Hamill will poll our schools individually to determine wait times for assessments.

Meanwhile, assessment funding was discussed. A question surrounding ISA funding was answered that this funding was discontinued four to five years ago. Current funding in place is:

SEPPA (Special Education per Pupil Amount) is allocated to boards on the basis of total enrolment. SEPPA recognizes the cost of providing additional assistance to the majority of students with special education needs.

Although not discussed at the meeting, for general information the SEPPA amounts for 2009-10 are:

- \$755.47 per student in JK to Grade 3
- \$581.57 per student in Grade 4 to 8
- \$383.80 per student in Grade 9 to 12

The High Needs Amount addresses the cost of providing the intensive staff support required by the small number of pupils with very high needs.

The Special Equipment Amount covers the cost of an individual student's equipment needs in excess of \$800 in the year of purchase. Eligibility criteria are outlined in the Special Education Funding Guidelines: Special Equipment Amount (SEA), 2009-10.

The Special Incidence Portion (SIP) supports pupils with exceptionally high needs who require more than two full-time staff to address health and safety needs. Eligibility criteria for SIP are outlined in the document entitled Special Education Funding Guidelines: Special Incidence Portion (SIP), 2009-10. We do not have any such students in the Board.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Accessible Schools Leading the Way

In 2005 the Accessibility Act was passed. Its main purpose was to ensure accessibility to all people in both the private and public sector.

The next steps are to comply with Customer Service Standards. The government is starting with District School Boards first. The implementation process will be lengthy, with final implementation being scheduled for 2025; however, boards must be able to show that they are working towards concrete accessibilities by January 2010.

Areas to be examined include, but are not limited to:

- Drafting policies and procedures
- Staff training (A training package, which is being made available on-line. Val will check to see if it is available yet, and if so, email the link to SEAC members)
- Stakeholder feedback, regarding what is working within the board and what is not
- Our facilities
- Our approaches and attitudes

Additional information regarding Customer Service Standards may be found on the OPSBA website at:

http://www.opsba.org/index.php?q=advocacy_and_action/accessible_schools_customer_service_guide

6.2 Dr. Ross Greene One-Day Workshop and Model on Collaborative Problem Solving

Don Parsons reviewed the upcoming one-day workshop with Dr. Greene on November 13, 2009, which focuses on collaborative supports for the social/behavioural needs of students. He will appear live at Nipigon-Red Rock District High School, with videoconference connections at Geraldton Composite High School, Lake Superior High School, Manitouwadge High School and Marathon High School. To date, 265 people have registered for the workshop.

Dr. Greene has agreed to be videotaped at the NRHS site so a copy may be retained by the board only (one copy). For members unable to attend the workshop the board resource members are confident that they will be permitted to view the videotape once it is available.

Don reviewed the FCBC Caregiver Handout, and also mentioned the new non-profit website recently launched by Dr. Greene: <http://www.livesinthebalance.org>

6.3 Funding Initiatives and System Update

Sherry Hamill reviewed the current funding initiatives available to the board:

Learning for All K to 12: The Ministry roll-out of this document will occur the week of November 9, 2009, which builds on the current document Education for All. The board has been allocated \$10,000 for use in this area.

Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA): The board has received two “pots” of initiative funds. The first amount is \$4,491 which has been allocated to training (release time) for teachers to work with experts from Child Care Resources. Four schools are participating: B.A. Parker Public School, George O'Neill Public School, Manitouwadge Public School and Margaret Twomey Public School. Question from Cindy Brown: Are parents called in and included in these sessions? Answer: Yes.

The next “pot” of money under this area, with some carry over from last year, is approximately \$41,000 which will focus on developing expertise and developing appropriate programs within the board.

Sherry gave an overview of other initiatives, although no dollar amounts are attached, that may have impact on the board:

Phase III of the IEP Review
Assessing Student Achievement of Students in Alternative Programs (for High Needs Students)

6.4 New Members for SEAC

We need new members for the committee. Therefore, members are asked to spread the word where they can. Val will also speak to Patti regarding newspaper advertisements. Other types of advertising included school newsletters, the board web site, and a ‘mailing invitation’ to agencies. This item will be discussed further at the next SEAC meeting.

7.0 Information Items

7.1 2009/2010 SEAC Contact List

This item was brought forward for information. If you require any changes to be made to your contact information, please email Corinne (chooper@sgdsb.on.ca) with the required changes.

8.0 Next Meeting Date/Time

Thursday, December 10, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.



KENORA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

200 FIRST STREET NORTH, KENORA, ONTARIO P9N 2K4

PHONE: (807) 468-9851

FAX: (807) 468-8094

PHYLLIS EIKRE, Director of Education and Secretary-Treasurer of the Board

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education
Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

COPY

November 10, 2009

Dear Madam Minister:

On September 9, 2009 the Kenora Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) received a copy of a letter sent to you from the Rainy River District School Board SEAC. Although this letter outlined three specific areas of concern: funding for a psychological and speech/language assessments, Bill 29, and the implementation of the proposed standard for Accessible Information and Communication, a copy of this letter is included with this correspondence. Our main concern would be the first point regarding funding.

The Kenora Catholic District School Board SEAC supports this letter and this particular concern about the impact the cessation of the Ontario Psychological Association Project (OPA) funding will have on wait times for important and necessary assessments for students. We, in Northwestern Ontario have little or no access to Board psychologists and psychometrics which results in the necessity for contracting of services from larger centres. This significantly increases the costs of our assessments. As our local agencies must also contract outside the district they too face the same concerns as in Rainy River District, in meeting the children and parents assessment needs in a timely manner.

We also recognize and support the benefits and importance that early intervention and timely assessments have had on student success and achievement. The Kenora Catholic District School Board SEAC recognizes that school boards will be challenged to meet the demands for assessments and to maintain the current standard of timely assessments that has been achieved as a result of the OPA funding project.

We trust that our concern and those raised by Rainy River District School Board and Durham District School Board will be taken in consideration in the future planning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harry Favreau".

Harry Favreau,
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Phyllis Eikre, Director of Education, Kenora Catholic DSB
Murray Delorme, Assistant to the Director, Kenora Catholic DSB
Darryl Michaluk, Chair, Kenora Catholic DSB
Estelle Cantera, Special Education Coordinator, Kenora Catholic DSB
SEAC Chairs, Ontario District School Boards

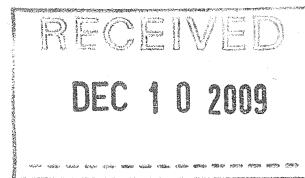


Lakehead
Public
Schools

Deborah Massaro
Chair
dmassaro@lakeheadschoools.ca

Jim McCuaig Education Centre
2135 Sills Street Thunder Bay ON P7E 5T2
Telephone (807) 625-5131 Fax (807) 622-0961

November 25, 2009



The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education
Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Dear Madame Minister:

At the November 24, 2009 Regular Board Meeting, Lakehead District School Board approved the following motion:

"THAT Lakehead District School Board send a letter to the Minister of Education expressing its support for the Special Education Advisory Committee's follow-up letter to the Minister of Education regarding the School Information Finder as outlined in Appendix A of Report No. 144-09."

Lakehead District School Board supports the efforts of the Special Education Advisory Committee in the best interests of students.

Sincerely,

Deborah Massaro
Chair of the Board

cc

Michael Gravelle, MPP, Thunder Bay-Superior North

Bill Mauro, MPP, Thunder Bay-Atikokan

Parent Involvement Committee

Council of School Council Chairs

District School Board SEAC's

PACC on SEAC

Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education

Trustees, Lakehead District School Board

OPSBA, Colleen Schenk, President

Your Children Our Students The Future

www.lakeheadschoools.ca

Lakehead District School Board



Lakehead
Public
Schools

Jim McCuaig Education Centre
2135 Sills Street
Thunder Bay ON P7E 5T2
Telephone (807) 625-5126
Fax (807) 623-7848

**Special Education
Advisory Committee**

SEAC

Chair: Susan Blekkenhorst

November 18, 2009

The Honourable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Education
Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

Dear Madam Minister:

The Lakehead District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee takes very seriously its role as advocate for programs and services that will meet the needs of all children. In the context of this role we felt the need to follow-up with our concern regarding the School Information Finder that your Ministry continues to display on your website.

We repeat from our previous letter, that while the School Information Finder may have some valuable information for parents, it includes information that is judgmental, biased, violates the basic human rights of individuals, and flies in the face of inclusive public education for all.

We understand that discussion has continued at the Partnership Table. Several months after every member at the Partnership Table requested that the site be removed while consultation continues, it is still up. We are encouraged to hear that you have stated that data collected as a result of the voluntary self-identification of our Aboriginal students will not be used on the School Information Finder.

While we are pleased to see that the Aboriginal data will not be used, we are at a loss to understand the value of having the percentage of Special Needs Students data placed on such a website. We reiterate our previous concern that this website is detrimental to school communities and encourages elitism. It implies that a school with a large number of students receiving special education services may not be as good as a school with fewer numbers.

We urge the Ministry of Education to remove the information on Special Education Students and work with stakeholders to ensure a strong and inclusive education system.

Sincerely,

Susan Blekkenhorst
Chair

Special Education Advisory Committee

cc: Michael Gravelle, MPP, Thunder Bay-Superior North

Bill Mauro, MPP, Thunder Bay-Atikokan
Parent Involvement Committee
Council of School Council Chairs
District School Board SEAC's
PAAC on SEAC
Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
Lakehead DSB Trustees
OPSBA, Colleen Schenk, President

SEAC Mtg

Newton, Valerie

From: Pella, Patti
To: Newton, Valerie
Cc:
Subject: FW: Support for SEACs
Attachments:

Sent: Fri 12/18/2009 12:28 PM

From: Susan Cook [mailto:SCook@opsba.org]
Sent: Friday, December 18, 2009 12:11 PM
To: Susan Cook
Cc: Gail Anderson
Subject: Support for SEACs

TO: MEMBERS OF THE OPSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Copy: Directors of Education

The following September motion from OPSBA's Eastern Region Council was referred to Education Program Work Team at the November Board of Directors meeting:

- That the question of how OPSBA might assist school boards with ways to improve their SEACs' effectiveness with respect to intercommunication, training and recruitment be referred to the Education Program Work Team.

Education Program Work Team met on December 11th and invited the Director of the Ministry's Special Education Program Branch to the meeting. One of the items discussed was the issue of support for SEACs. The Director, Barry Finlay, indicated that the Ministry's Special Education branch is moving ahead on initiatives to support and strengthen Special Education Advisory Committees. This will include an improved information-sharing process and development of resources to assist SEAC members. More information will be provided early in 2010.

Best wishes for the holidays!

Susan Cook

Communications and Policy Associate

Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Tel: 416-340-2540

scook@opsba.org

Special Education Documents

The Ministry comments that “students who have behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities, may require special education programs and / or services to benefit fully from their school experience.”

By visiting the following Ministry of Education website link you will find a wealth of information at your fingertips:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html>

In addition to curriculum documents, which outline accommodations for identified students, you will also find information in the areas of:

- Overviews of Special Education Processes
- Resolving Identification or Placement Issues
- Ministry Policy Direction regarding Special Education
- Resource Documents
- Website links to other sites regarding Special Education in Ontario

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Information Booklet



Date: March 27, 2007

Revised: January 5, 2010

This booklet contains information on:

- **Membership and Qualifications**
- **Member Duties and Responsibilities**
- **Board Responsibilities to SEAC**
- **Related Information**

Board Contacts

Sherry Hamill, *Special Education Board Lead*

Beardmore Public School
P.O. Box 210 - Beardmore, ON P0T 1G0
Work: 807-875-2128 Fax: 807-875-2062
Email: shamill@sgdsb.on.ca

Valerie Newton, *Superintendent of Student Success*

Superior-Greenstone District School Board
P.O. Bag 'A' – Marathon, ON P0T 2E0
Work: 807-229-0436, extn 236 Fax: 807-229-1471
Email: vnewton@sgdsb.on.ca

Board Responsibilities to SEAC

The Board shall:

- Make available the personnel and facilities that the Board considers necessary for the proper functioning of the committee.
- Include personnel necessary to permit the use of electronic means for holding meetings.
- Provide members and alternates with information and orientation respecting:
 - ⇒ Roles of the SEAC and of the Board regarding Special Education
 - ⇒ Ministry and Board policies regarding Special Education
- Ensure that the committee has an opportunity to be heard before the Board/Committee to which the recommendation is referred.
- Ensure that an opportunity for SEAC to participate in the Annual Special Education Review is available.
- Ensure that an opportunity for SEAC to participate in the Board's budget process in Special Education is available.
- Ensure that an opportunity for SEAC to review the Boards' Special Education financial statements is available.

SEAC Meetings

All SEAC meetings are open to the general public and may take place by teleconference, videoconference, face-to-face, or a combination of the three methods.

SEAC Chair and Vice Chair

- Members shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among their members. The Vice Chair acts in the absence of the Chair.
- If both the Chair and the Vice Chair are absent from a meeting, the members in attendance elect a Chair for that meeting.

Quorum and Voting

- A majority of the members of the committee is a quorum. A meeting must have quorum in order to be a “voting” meeting. If quorum is not met, the members may decide to proceed with an “information meeting” only.
- A vote of the majority of the members present bind the committee.
- Every member, or alternate if sitting for a member, has a vote.
- The Chair may vote with the SEAC members on any motion.
- Any motion that has an equality of votes is lost.

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Overview

Each Board in the Province of Ontario is required to establish a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) as defined in *Ontario Regulation 464/97* made under the *Education Act, Special Education Advisory Committees*.

Duties of SEAC

1. Attendance at all SEAC meetings. Members are to confirm their attendance at all meetings at the time the electronic agenda is forwarded.

The Committee shall meet at least 10 times per year.

2. Participate in the review of the Board's Annual Special Education Plan.
 - this annual review takes place at the June SEAC meeting.
3. Review and provide input into the Board's Special Education budget.
 - the budget for the upcoming school year is presented annually at the June SEAC meeting.
4. Reviews the Board's Financial Statements
 - a presentation by the Superintendent of Business is made to SEAC in the Fall of each year.
 - the SEAC Chair and the Superintendent of Business prepare material for regional presentations to the public.
5. Participates in other activities, including, but not limited to:
 - reviewing the proposed school year calendar
 - participating in professional development sessions
6. Makes recommendations to the board regarding, but not limited to:
 - Annual Special Education Plan
 - Special Education Budget
 - any matter affecting the establishment, development and delivery of special education programs and services for exceptional pupils of the Board.

- representation).
- the person may not be employed by the Board.

Term of Office

SEAC members shall hold office during the term of the Board and until a new board is organized. This will be until the year 2010 for our current members.

Vacancies

When the Board appoints a person to fill a vacancy, the Board must ensure that the individual is qualified.

Disqualifications

A SEAC member is disqualified if he/she:

- is convicted of an indictable offence (shall not fill until appeal time has elapsed or appeal has been heard, if quashed no vacancy)
- absent without being authorized by resolution entered in the minutes from 3 consecutive regular meetings of the committee
- Ceases to hold the qualifications to be appointed to the committee

Membership in SEAC

The Act stipulates that:

Each district school board **shall** establish a SEAC that **shall** consist of:

- 1 representative** from each local association that operates locally within the area of the jurisdiction of the Board:
 - ⇒ no more than **12**;
 - ⇒ nominated by the location association;
 - ⇒ appointed by the Board.

NOTE: Where no local association or associations have been established, instead of the above, the Board **shall** appoint two members who are not members of the board.

- 2 members** of the Board, appointed from their own members;
- 1 person to represent the interest of First Nations or native students**, nominated by the councils of the bands, and nominated by the Board.

Alternates

- All of the above are to have alternates, nominated and appointed under the same rules as the members.

Each district school board **may** have:

- 1 or more members** who are neither representatives of a local associations nor members of the Board or another committee of the board.

Qualifications for Members and Alternates

- the person is qualified to vote for members of the Board and is a resident of its area of jurisdiction (does not apply to native