



SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 20, 2024

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	Present: H. Clark, Autism Ontario E. Clow, Member-at-Large K. Hill, Member-at-Large L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario H. Simson, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston M. Covey, Community Living Kingston Regrets: A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) S. Patay, Lennox & Addington Resources for Children
	Staff:
	Present: M. Blackburn, Principal of Educational Services S. Gillam, Superintendent, Learning for All N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator T. Vail, Special Education Program Coordinator A. Ward, Special Education Program Coordinator L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Coordinator J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator
Guests:	Recorder:
None at this time.	J. Senior, Administrative Assistant

1. WELCOME

Chair McGregor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair McGregor read the Acknowledgement of Territory:

“The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd that the agenda be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 SEAC Minutes February 14, 2024

MOVED BY: Member-at-Large Katrina Hill that the February 14, 2024, SEAC Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

None at this time.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Building Our Vision for the Future, Enhancing Special Education Services in our District, 2023-2024 Monitoring Document – Principal Michael Blackburn and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard shared a presentation explaining key areas of focus and the indicators of success for the Special Education Services Monitoring Document.

1. **Programs and Programming – *Programs and Programming Matter*:** Explore and implement programs and programming that are personalized to student’s strengths and needs, and responsive to goals, progress, and future opportunities.

- **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Critically examine District programs, services, and supports to assess impact and efficacy.
 - **Key Indicators:**
 - LINKS Program evaluation
 - Lexia
 - Special Education Review/Special Education Changes
 - Learning Program Support (LPS) teacher role and Secondary Literacy
 - Student Support Teacher (SST) Guide
 - Team/Affinity Data – Yearly Review
 - Additional supports/services - Camp
2. **Individualized Supports and Accommodations – *Supports Matter*:** Explore and implement supports and accommodations that increase access and opportunities for learning and reduce barriers to success.
- **Key area of focus:** Enhancing – Examine and focus on transitional supports for students with particular attention to Transition to Kindergarten (T2K), Kindergarten to Grade 1, Grades 7 to 9.
 - **Key Indicators:**
 - Grade 8 to 9 Transitions and IEP – LPS and SST meeting sharing
 - Multi-Disciplinary Team consent
 - T2K – family workshop
 - Transition Support Document and Resources
 - Queen’s University Research – IEP and Self Advocacy
3. **Inclusive and Supportive Culture – *Culture Matters*:** Explore and implement strategies to support an inclusive and supportive culture that creates a sense of belonging, teamwork, and shared belief in what is possible.
- **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Develop and share supportive resources (e.g., IEP, IPRC, transitional supports).
 - **Key Indicators:**
 - IEP Student Guide
 - IPRC Processes – Sydenham High School Pilot
 - IPRC for families – support resources
 - Equity Committee Survey and ongoing feedback
 - Transition Supports/Resources

4. **Staff Support/Human Resources Matter – *People Matter*:** Explore and implement staff and team capacity building to support a team approach within a multi-tiered system of support.

- **Key area of focus:** Continuing – Continue to build staff knowledge and capacity to support diverse learners within inclusive classrooms.
- **Key Indicators:**
 - Secondary School Teams – Tier 1
 - Literacy Team – IEPs, UDL
 - Physical Literacy and Inclusion
 - FASD Professional Learning
 - Neuro Vibes and Upper Canada District School Board
 - Tech Teachers
 - EA PA Day
 - Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Chair McGregor called upon SEAC Members for questions regarding the 2023-2024 Monitoring Document.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

8.1 Haley Clark, Autism Ontario - Report from Haley Clark - Sent to SEAC via email on March 5, 2024.

8.2 Autism Ontario – Participants Required for Research Study. A research project (undertaken by Ally Frid) requires special education teachers, and teachers who work with children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from across Ontario, for a research study about their experience working with children with ASD who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices in the classroom, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study has been reviewed for ethical compliance by the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board. Contact Ally Frid or Dr. Thomas Abrams for more details.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Scot Gillam shared the following:

A. Ministry Updates:

Regulatory and Policy Reforms to Support the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023 – Strengthening Parental Involvement and Increasing Transparency

As you are aware, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023 (the Act) received Royal Assent on June 8, 2023. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is moving forward with regulatory and policy reforms that refocus school boards on academic achievement in addition to **strengthening parental involvement and increasing transparency**. The ministry has consulted with key sector partners through various channels to inform the development of the regulation and policies, and we appreciate the feedback provided.

The reforms and supporting materials will:

- Foster greater parental involvement through the release of an accessible parent-friendly resource to help parents support their child’s success and make informed decisions about their education; and
- Increase transparency to support greater engagement of parents in their child’s education through:
 - A Student Achievement Plan tool and public reporting template that will support school boards in adopting provincial priorities into their publicly posted multi-year plans.

Strengthening Parental Involvement

Your Child’s Education: A Parent Guide to our School System

A key theme of the Act is strengthening parental involvement. To support parent involvement in their children’s education and to promote parent participation in school, the ministry has developed a [parent-friendly resource](#) with easy to access information. This webpage is intended to be a “one-stop shop” resource for parents with links to existing webpages and ministry-developed resources so that parents have the information they need to make informed decisions about their child’s education and support their learning.

Increasing Transparency

Student Achievement Plan Tool and Public Reporting Template

As part of the July 2023 memorandum, the ministry released a Student Achievement Plan Framework, which aligns with the regulated provincial priorities (O. Reg. 224/23). The framework sets out goals and performance indicators for school boards to monitor student achievement, develop action plans and measure their progress on improving student outcomes.

The Ministry provided pre-populated materials to support the development and reporting of board Student Achievement Plans as part of the Ministry Communications to District School Boards in January 2024. All Student Achievement Plan materials are available on a secure Ministry SharePoint site. Access has been provided to all Directors of Education.

These materials included:

- 1) **Student Achievement Plan Tool:** Guides school boards through the action planning process based on the analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data.
- 2) **Student Achievement Plan Public Reporting Template:** Provides a consistent approach for communicating boards' data, action plans and progress on indicators to their communities.

Under the Act, school boards are required to publicly report on progress toward the provincial priorities and meet with parents in the first two months and last two months of each school year to discuss the priorities and progress towards them. To support school boards in meeting this requirement and in preparation for their meeting with parents and communities on multi-year plans before the end of the school year, school boards are expected to complete the Student Achievement Plan Public Reporting Template and post to their website by April 2, 2024. School boards are also expected to notify the ministry once the Student Achievement Plan Public Reporting Template is posted on their website by emailing a weblink to the Regional Office.

B. Educational Services Update:

Elementary Special Education Service Delivery Update

Communication has been shared with all impacted staff and current students attending the various programs that are being dissolved. Transition supports will be offered to support students returning to their home schools, with the support and guidance of staff currently allocated to the programs and staff at the home school. More general communication has been shared with all staff, and parents/caregivers across Limestone. Key community partners have also been contacted by Superintendent Gillam and other members of the Educational Services leadership team.

Staffing will follow the established LDSB procedures, and more updates will be provided as this process continues in the Spring of 2024. The allocation of Intensive Support Teachers, additional Student Support teacher and literacy intervention support, and Education Assistants will take place in the upcoming weeks as schools prepare their school profiles. These profiles assist Educational Services leadership team members in allocating supports across the system. A more fulsome report on these allocations will be forthcoming to SEAC in the coming months.

Transition to Kindergarten Event

The Transition to Kindergarten Virtual Family Workshop took place on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. This event is the result of collaboration between the three local school boards and our community partners. The workshop is for families of children with special education needs and provides vital information to support the transition into Kindergarten. A big thanks to all involved from the Educational Services leadership team.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week – March 18-22, 2024

The Limestone District School Board is committed to supporting, affirming and the celebration of our neurodivergent community during the week of March 18-22, 2024, in support of Neurodiversity Celebration Week. Neurodiversity refers to the natural diversity of human minds. It is a biological fact that we are diverse in our minds just like we are in our ethnicity, gender, sexuality etc. In LDSB, we look to celebrate and affirm that no two minds are alike!

For the duration of the week, schools will have the opportunity to explore curated materials, resources to expand knowledge, understanding and celebration through learning. LDSB social media will highlight LDSB Neuro Vibes posters that have been shared and posted in many LDSB schools (and other community agencies).

March is Easter Seals Month

March is Easter Seals Month and LDSB will be reaching out to staff and families to help support a campaign to send students to camp in the LDSB area starting on March 18th. Information on how to support Easter Seals will be sent to all staff and on social media. We highlight that all funds raised in the KFL&A area remain in this area to support Easter Seals Camp and the provision of accessible equipment for children and families of Limestone.

9.2 Special Education Mission Statement – Principal Mike Blackburn shared the Special Education Mission Statement one last time asking for SEAC Members to reflect and share any feedback or changes wanted at our next meeting. Special Education Mission Statement:

“Our mission is to support the creation of equitable, supportive, and fully inclusive learning spaces where all students can achieve their goals, develop to their full potential, and experience success. Our purpose is to support staff in recognizing the unique strengths and needs of every student and to enable the conditions for learning, engagement, belonging, and achievement.”

Chair McGregor called on SEAC Members for questions.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Member-at-Large Erin Clow, that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.