

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 16, 2024

Public Meeting

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Members:
T. Lloyd K. McGregor	Present: H. Clark, Autism Ontario E. Clow, Member-at-Large A. Martin, Member-at-Large (Queen's University) H. Simson, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston Z. Rogers, Community Living Kingston J. Barker, Lennox & Addington Resources for Children L. Clouthier, Easter Seals Ontario Regrets: C. Lord, Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario K. Hill, Member-at-Large
Invitees:	Staff:
	Present: S. Gillam, Superintendent, Learning for All C. Snider, Special Education Program Coordinator M. Aylsworth, Special Education Program Coordinator M. West, Special Education Program Coordinator L. Conboy, Mental Health Lead J. Lalonde, Special Education Program Coordinator N. Dillard, Vice-Principal of Educational Services T. Bonham-Carter, Special Education Program Coordinator Regrets: M. Blackburn, Principal of Educational Services W. Fisher, Educational Services and Safe Schools Coordinator
Guests:	Recorder:
M. Smit, Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston	J. Senior, Administrative Assistant

1. WELCOME

Limestone District School Board

Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.

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.”

Superintendent Scot Gillam welcomed new and returning SEAC Members.

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

MOVED BY: Erin Clow that the September 11, 2024, IEC Minutes be approved. Carried.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

5.1 MOTION: Trustee Lloyd – That SEAC send a letter to the Ontario College of Teachers, with copies to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Colleges and Universities, requesting an update to the curriculum in Ontario’s Teacher’s Colleges to better meet the diverse needs of students with special education requirements.

MOVED BY: All SEAC Members. Carried.

5.2 New membership – Epilepsy Southeastern Ontario is recommending that Christina Lord, who is the Executive Director in our district, represent Epilepsy Southeastern Ontario on the Limestone District School Board SEAC.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Special Education Operational Plan – Monitoring Document – Vice Principal Nicola Dillard delivered a comprehensive presentation on the Special Education Plan- Monitoring Document. The key points of the presentation are summarized as follows:

SEAC and Educational Services Mission Statement:

Limestone District School Board

Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee.

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 to recognize the unique strengths and needs of every student and to enable the conditions for learning, engagement, belonging and achievement.

The objectives and actions of our monitoring and operational plan are based on the mission and purpose statement we created last year with input from SEAC. This plan is also aligned with our Special Education Plan, which is available on the LDSB website. Our focus is on establishing the necessary conditions in every school to support every student.

To fulfill our mission and purpose, we continue to emphasize four key principles identified during the Special Education Review, incorporating feedback from our students, families, staff, and community partners.

Key Principles:

- Culture Matters
- Supports Matter
- Programming Matters
- People Matter

Capacity building is central to our efforts to enhance the educational experiences of students across Limestone. Over the past few years, we have maintained a consistent focus on core areas while expanding into new areas of learning. This expansion is based on observations and data collected throughout our system, leading to new insights into the conditions that have the greatest impact.

Key Areas of Focus for Capacity Building:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Executive Functions
- Assistive Technology
- Relationship-Based Approaches
- Access and Accessibility
- Modifications/Accommodations
- Neuroaffirming and Inclusive Practices
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

The previous monitoring plan identified goals in four areas and gave a general overview of our progress. While it was clearly linked to our department goals and the Special Education Review, it remained quite separate from the broader LDSB Strategic Plan and goals. There is now an opportunity to achieve greater alignment, coherence, and connection with the 'See Yourself In Limestone' initiative, ensuring every school and every student is included.

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Template for the new Monitoring and Operational Plan:

- Goals from the strategic plan
- Objectives/Goals for our Department
- Specific Strategies/Actions
- Clear timelines, responsibilities, and monitoring

We will maintain our focus on our mission, key principles, and capacity-building areas. We look forward to presenting our first report in December, highlighting the important and impactful work across our District.

6.2 Summer Special Education Supports and Mental Health Funding Report – Mental Health Lead Laura Conboy, and Vice Principal Nicola Dillard provided an overview of the Summer Special Education Supports and Mental Health Funding for students with special educational needs. Here are the key points:

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

Literacy Camp Support:

- Educational Assistants (EAs) supported students with special education needs at Camp Read-A-Lot.
- Twelve EAs provided support over three weeks at four LDSB sites.

Summer School:

- A Learning Program Support teacher offered guidance and resources.
- Support was provided for students with special education needs in summer credit courses.

Sundance Youth Facility:

- Educational programming and support were provided to youth in custody.
- Students engaged in credit and non-credit courses through a partnership with the St. Lawrence Youth Association.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

Back to School Transitions:

- EAs and Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) supported over 700 students with special education needs and/or complex mental health concerns.
- Support included school visits, team meetings, connections to caring adults, and classroom tours.

Summer Mental Health Supports:

- Two Attendance Counsellors (ACs), one Student Support Counsellor (SSC), and an Adolescent Care Worker (ACW) provided transitional support to elementary and secondary students.
- Forty-one elementary and nine secondary students received in-person and virtual transitional support. Five students were provided with a school tour and introduced to supportive adults.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

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ACW for Summer School and Read-A-Lot:

- An ACW supported secondary students enrolled in summer school who were experiencing social, emotional, behavioral, and attendance issues.
- An ACW also implemented “Kids Have Stress Tool” sessions for two Grade 1-2 classes during Read-A-Lot Summer Literacy Program.

EA Professional Learning:

- Behaviour Management Systems (BMS) training for 75 casual EAs and 34 Intensive Support Teachers (ISTs). BMS training focuses on prevention through strategies like understanding students, recognizing early warning signs, and using calming and de-escalation techniques. It also covers personal safety methods such as avoidance, releases, and blocks.
- Intensive Skills Y-Training for 38 EAs, focusing on supporting students with complex behavioral and mental health needs. demonstration, and role-playing strategies. Participants also received certification in Behaviour Management Systems training.

Mental Health Counselling:

- Ongoing support from a Social Worker for students on their existing caseload.
- Seventeen students received ongoing therapy throughout July and August.

Out of the City Art Camp:

- Nineteen racialized and newcomer students attended a 5-day art camp led by Zimbabwean Canadian stone sculpting artist Chaka Chikodzi.
- Three secondary students volunteered to work at the camp.

Pilot Project with Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) – Year 2:

- Eighteen students benefited from psychiatric assessments, diagnostic clarification, and medication recommendations through a time-limited collaboration with KHSC.

Mental Health Lit - Mental Health in Action:

- Over 90 educators and 20 administrators completed the School Mental Health Ontario course.

PSSP Professional Learning:

- Approximately 50 mental health support staff participated in a day of collaboration and learning on various mental health and substance use strategies:
 - Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy Highlights
 - Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol
 - Suicide Response Protocol
 - Mental Health and Addiction Nurses
 - Youthab
 - Transgender Health Clinic
 - Maltby Centre – Nexus and One Stop Talk

These programs aimed to support the educational and mental health needs of students, ensuring a smooth transition back to school and providing ongoing support throughout the summer.

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7. PRESENTATION

7.1 **Martin Smit, Educational Consultant for Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO)-** Martin shared a presentation explaining the services provided by LDAO.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 **Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario** - Letter from Sadie Augustyn, Chairperson of Epilepsy South Eastern Ontario, nominating Christina Lord, the Executive Director, to represent the organization as a member of the LDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). Provided for information.

9. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

9.1 **Autism Ontario Updates- October 2024** – Report from Haley Clark. Provided for information.

9.2 **Easter Seals Ontario** – Linda Clouthier provided details about an Easter Seals event, Lights On The Lake Event being held on Saturday, November 9, 2024.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 **Administrative Report: Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Scot Gillam reviewed the Superintendent's Report that was included in the Agenda Package.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 6, 2024

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd, that the meeting adjourn. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm.