

# **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*Wednesday, January 9, 2019*

**6:00 pm Board Room; C.E.C.**

## **WCDSB Mission Statement**

*As disciples of Christ,  
we educate and nurture hope  
in all learners  
to realize their full potential  
to transform God's world.*

**CHAIR: Irene Holdbrook**

## **MEMBERS**

**WCDSB Trustee – Jeanne Gravelle**

**WCDSB Trustee – Tracey Weiler**

**Waterloo Regional Down Syndrome Society – Kim Murphy**

**Waterloo Regional Police - John Gilbert**

**Autism Ontario – Waterloo Chapter – Frank Thoms, Vice Chair**

**CNIB – Irene Holdbrook, Chair**

**Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region – Stuart Cross**

**Waterloo Region Family Network – Sue Simpson**



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## SEAC Committee Meeting Agenda

<b>Date&amp; Time:</b>	Wednesday, January 9, 2018, 6:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Boardroom, Catholic Education Centre
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	Wednesday, February 6, 2019
<b>Committee Members:</b> Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Frank Thoms, Tracey Weiler, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook, Stuart Cross; Sue Simpson	
<b>Administrative Officials:</b> Laura Shoemaker, Erin Lemak	

1. Opening Prayer  Welcome	L. Shoemaker
2. Approval of Agenda  Motion by: Seconded:	
3. Declared Pecuniary Interest	
4. Approval of the Minutes  Motion by: Seconded	
5.School System Operational Business  5.1. Safe Schools	Judy Merkel
6. Ministry Updates (10 min)	
7. SEAC Committee Functions 7.1 Pro Grant	SEAC members
8. Policy Advice to the Board	
9. Association Updates (20 minutes)	



10. Pending Items	
11. Adjournment	
12. Action Items Place Holder	

## Committee Meeting Minutes

<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 6:30 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Boardroom, Catholic Education Centre
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	Wednesday, January 9, 2019
<b>Committee Members:</b> Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Frank Thoms, Bill Conway, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook	
<b>Administrative Officials:</b> Laura Shoemaker, Erin Lemak	
<b>Regrets:</b> Stuart Cross; Sue Simpson	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opening Prayer</b> <b>Welcome</b></li> </ul>	L. Shoemaker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approval of Agenda</b>  Motion by: Jeanne Gravelle Seconded: Bill Conway</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Declared Pecuniary Interest</b> N/A	
<b>4. Approval of the Minutes</b>  Motion by: John Gilbert Seconded: Jeanne Gravelle	
<b>5. School System Operational Business</b> 5.1. Autism Report  <u><b>Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder</b></u>  <b>Universal Support Strategies</b>  Starting Level of Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting with the classroom teacher and the Special Education Teacher. The classroom teacher is responsible for programming for their students and is the first line of support</li> <li>• Other supports may include the CYCW or EA or both</li> </ul>	E. Lemak L Shoemaker

- These staff interact and support the student on a daily basis so it is key that we build capacity within our school staff
- Professional development is ongoing and offered to all staff and may take place in a variety of forms, for example workshops, in services, online programs, conferences
- Additional Support may be required during preschool transition to school, when a student is arriving from another school or newly diagnosed, when new assessments are done or at any times of change, challenge or transition

Another level of support (Collaborative team):

- Special Education Liaison - key point of contact for the school. If a school was looking to access more supports or services, they would do so through their SEL
- Psychoeducational Consultant – WCDSB Psychoeducational Consultants are qualified to diagnose ASD and recommend/assess appropriate programming
- Speech-language pathologist – Support students who have communication challenges in the classroom (expressive & receptive language, social communication) and provide students with augmentative communication systems (e.g. ipad with Proloquo2Go software)
- Social Worker – acts as a support for students and their families and liaise and communicate with community agencies
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst or ABA Facilitator – focus on ABA and Universal Supports in the classroom for all students

Additional Services:

- Itinerant Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Consulting Audiologist
- Itinerant Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- Itinerant Teacher the Gifted
- Community Transitions Support Worker
- Communication Disorder Assistant
- Mental Health Lead
- Special Education Assistive Technology Resource Teacher

#### **Role of BCBA/ABA Facilitator**

Serve as a member of the collaborative team who focus on ABA and Universal Supports in the classroom for all students, especially those with a diagnosis of ASD.

- Utilization of Universal Supports and the implementation of a variety of evidence-based ABA strategies
- Focus on building capacity with school staff to assist in student skill acquisition, independence and inclusion
- Data collection, review and analysis to inform programming, IEP and BSP development, implementation and monitoring
- Develop and deliver training, workshops and resources to school staff
- Provide families with resources about ASD and ABA strategies

Consultation Support:

- School team case conference
- Gather information, review student profile
- Complete school-based observation(s) to determine target behaviours

- Collect, analyze and review ABC data with school staff to inform development of BSP, if applicable, in collaboration with CYCW as required

Referral Support:

- Completion of all aspects outlined in Consultation Support
- In-school coaching and modeling of ABA strategies
- Collaboration with school based CYCW, SLP etc.as applicable
- Additional follow-up meeting with parents is available

Universal Supports:

- highly effective strategies designed to help educators create an inclusive environment, promote independence, prevent problem behaviour, increase learning opportunities
- Universal Supports assist students in accessing the curriculum

Erin also talked about School Support Program consisting of planning tools offering help with classroom, peer and universal supports, instructional and visual strategies and functional communication.

**6. Ministry Updates**

6.1 SEAC budget – on hold until funding announcement from Ministry is made

**7. SEAC Committee Functions**

7.1. On hold until funding announcement from Ministry is made

**8. Policy Advice to the Board**

N/A

**9. Association Concerns/Association Updates  
(20 minutes)**

**9.1. Trustee Update**

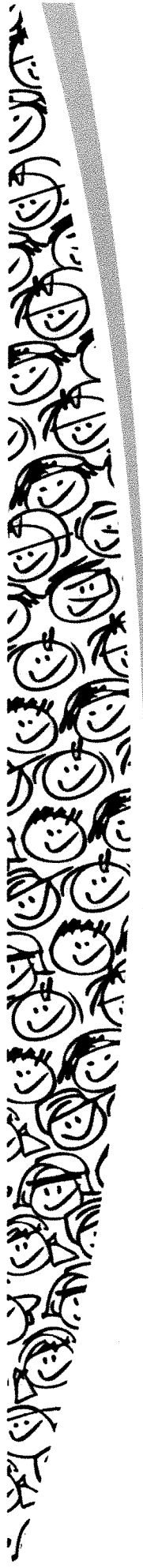
- Teacher Learning & Leadership Program
- Pastoral Plan Update
- Autism Support Plan
- English as a Second Language Update
- New Ontario Human Rights Policy
- Inaugural Meeting - Monday, December 3, 2018

For more details, please see link below:

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/wcdsb-board-meeting-bulletin-november-2018>

With Bill Conway being selected new Catholic Board Chair, new trustee that will sit on the SEAC committee is Tracey Weiler and the alternative representative will be Kevin Dupuis.

**10. Pending Items N/A**



<b>11. Adjournment</b>  Motion to end meeting:  Motion by: Jeanne Gravelle Seconded: Kim Murphy	
<b>12. Action Items Place Holder</b>	



**Date:** January 9, 2019  
**To:** SEAC  
**From:** Director of Education; Superintendent of Learning: Special Education  
**Subject:** Safe Schools Update

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**Type of Report:** ☐ Decision-Making  
☐ Monitoring  
☐ Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

**Type of Information:** ☐ Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making  
☐ Monitoring Information of Board Policy XX XXX  
☒ Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

**Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)**

- Education Act: 306-311; Regulations: 37/01 (2), 106/01
- Ministry Policy & Program Memoranda 119, 120, 128, 130, 141, 142, 144, 145,
- Safe Schools Act (2000) (2009): 309-312
- Bill 13, Accepting Schools Act (2012)
- Bill 157, Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act (Feb. 1, 2010)
- Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- 1 001: Ends

**Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:**

- Ontario's Well-Being Strategy

**Alignment to the MYSP:**

**Strategic Priority:** Nurturing Our Catholic Community

**Strategic Directions:** Everyone is included, respected and welcomed. Our decisions, actions and stewardship of resources are evidence-based and responsive.

**Goal:** To support an environment of inclusion with improved implementation of the principles of Learning for All. To increase awareness and respect of differences within our school communities.

**Special Education Plan:**

Section 2, Section 4, Section 6, Section 10

**Background/Comments:**

**Strategic Priority:** Nurturing Our Catholic Community



**Strategic Directions:** Everyone is included, respected and welcomed. Our decisions, actions and stewardship of resources are evidence-based and responsive.

**Goal:** To support an environment of inclusion with improved implementation of the principles of Learning for All. To increase awareness and respect of differences within our school communities.

## Background

At the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, we believe that every student has a right to learn in a safe, caring and supportive environment. Our learning environments foster positive Christ centered relationships that are at the heart of all our efforts to promote student achievement and well-being. The WCDSB vision for safe and accepting schools clearly aligns with the publication of *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Ontario Education (2014)*, wherein The Ministry of Education made a commitment to every student in the province of Ontario. Regardless of 'ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or other factors' (p. 8), all students should be able to access the curriculum, feel safe at school, and have a sense of belonging. In addition to this, The Ministry of Education also introduced *Ontario's Well-Being Strategy for Education: Discussion Document (2016)* which has also served to guide our Safe and Caring Schools focus in WCDSB.

**There are four key components at the foundation of Ontario's well-being strategy:**

- Positive Mental Health
- Safe and Accepting Schools
- Healthy Schools
- Equity and Inclusive Education



Well-being is that positive sense of self, spirit and belonging that we feel when our cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs are being met. To this end, many strong initiatives that support these pillars in relation to Safe and Caring Schools in WCDSB have been implemented.

## Safe and Accepting Schools

The board recognizes that an inclusive, restorative, respectful and Christ-centered environment where all members of the school community feel safe, welcomed and accepted is most conducive to learning. Positive behaviour is promoted through the Catholic Values lens as students are provided many opportunities to correct behaviours, seek reconciliation and be given opportunities to redeem themselves. Progressive discipline is an entire school approach that requires all stakeholders to guide, support and model proper behaviour for the students. Suspensions and expulsions are part of the progressive discipline continuum with an escalation of supports, interventions and strategies.

The measurable goal for Safe Schools at WCDSB is the reduction in the number of Suspensions and Expulsions issued to students through effective utilization of restorative justice, progressive discipline and careful consideration of mitigating and other factors. Ultimately, the Superintendent of Education for Safe Schools is responsible for ensuring the strategies are understood and fully utilized in schools. Principals are responsible for maintaining order and proper discipline in their schools. Safe School Teams in each school collaborate to develop a Safe School Plan that specifically addresses Bullying Intervention and Prevention, Progressive Discipline, Promoting a Positive School Climate, Restorative Justice and Emergency Response Procedures in accordance with Ministry and Board policies and procedures.

## Mental Health and Wellness

The promotion of a positive and safe school climate is frequently cited as being effective at preventing student suspension and expulsion.

The WCDSB has taken a well-rounded approach to improving school/board culture by:

- Promotion of discussions about belonging, resiliency, and strengths-based practice to administrators, staff, and trustees
- Launched mental health and wellness presentations in selected grades at elementary schools across the Board, with a specific focus on anxiety, depression and community resources, and practicing calming strategies together.
- Targeted training for students in grade 4-8 to improve mental health awareness, promote help-seeking, combat stigma, take an active role in promoting their own positive mental health by incorporating calming activities into their daily routines.
- Launch of socio-emotional literacy programming in JK-3 board-wide, providing classroom activities designed by a multidisciplinary team to enhance social skills, problem solving, and communication skills.
- Bell Let's Talk Day used as a platform for schools to engage in and design specific activities to capture how their students view positive mental health, with specific themes including being kind, listening, speaking up, etc.,
- Twitter contest for the submission that best captures the spirit of positive mental health.
- Opportunity provided for all employee groups to participate in Mental Health Awareness Sessions through the Life Long Learning Series. Topics included:

- a) Understanding Anxiety
- b) Resiliency
- c) Community Connections

In addition to our distinct Mental Health Strategies school boards are required to conduct school climate surveys of students, school staff and parents at least once every two years as they all play a key role in contributing to a positive school climate. The survey data informs strengths and needs at the Board and school levels (can drill down by grade and gender) to inform evidence-based programs to engage in. The theory of action is that IF resiliency is strengthened in our students, THEN students are more likely to experience success in the future, e.g. respond to challenges. By promoting developmental strengths through our resiliency assessment, the WCDSB can proactively program to the specific needs of students in addition to providing learning modules for staff. The School Climate Survey for Students, Parents and Staff will take place in March of 2019.

## Equity and Inclusive Education

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*As stated in Ontario's Well-Being Strategy for Education, "Supporting equity and inclusive education helps the education community identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to support student achievement and well-being. Research confirms that students who feel welcome and accepted in their schools and see themselves reflected in the curriculum and community are more likely to succeed academically. In fact, everyone in our publicly funded education system – regardless of background or personal circumstances – should feel engaged and included." (page 6)*

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Under the guiding principle of "Reaching Every Student," secondary schools in Ontario use many strategies, interventions and innovative alternative programs to support, assist and meet the unique learning needs of students. These options exist in schools, in other school board facilities, in partnerships with community agencies and employers and other creative learning structures.

There is a small but distinct group of students whose needs are not met by traditional in-school programs and interventions. Often, many programs have been tried but without success. These 14 to 17-year-old students are offered the Supervised Alternative Learning program as an option. The SAL Plan is created with the student, in collaboration with the school staff and the SAL coordinator. This SAL Plan will meet the unique individual needs and provide an individualized alternative learning experience which enables their progress towards their goals which may include obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) or a Certificate of Participation.

The location of the SAL program is determined based on student need. Students can work with their school and school staff through the program or be invited to attend St. Don Bosco in either Kitchener or Cambridge.

The WCDSB St. Don Bosco sites also support our students who for various reasons, are temporarily dismissed from the school setting. The accepting and caring environments provide a positive opportunity for students to be supported in addressing students' social, emotional, mental health, and behavioral concerns. Small student-to-teacher ratios and communication between stakeholders has demonstrated evidence of re-engagement through student achievement.

### **Healthy Schools**

Empirical research around the world shows a direct connection between healthy habits and academic achievement, positive mental health & well-being as well as decreased undesirable behaviours in school. In October 2014, the Ministry of Education included well-being as a goal in its Achieving Excellence renewed vision further cementing the connection between physical activity and mental health and well-being in our schools

The WCDSB has committed to using the Healthy Schools Framework to assess the ongoing needs and areas for growth in each of our schools. By June 2018 all of the schools in WCDSB have completed this inventory and in collaboration with our Public Health Nurses, WCDSB's Healthy Active Living Consultant, the Mental Health & Well Being Consultant and the Superintendent of Learning will work to develop comprehensive approaches to creating healthy school models.

### **Current Initiatives and Next Steps:**

- Our Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and is moving to align our prevention philosophy with a Board Wide focus on teaching well-being as a skill and to this point twenty-two of our 45 elementary schools and two of our secondary schools are participating in our Umbrella Pilot project.
- Restorative Training Practices and Conflict Mediation that have been adopted strongly in some of our Secondary Schools will be re-engaged for full implementation in all our schools with an upcoming focus on our elementary schools.
- Finally, in order to provide another option for safe school programming, in collaboration with the Cambridge YMCA, an "*ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION PROGRAM*" pilot program has been established which focuses on supporting students on short term suspensions. Alternatives to support long term suspensions and expulsions is also being investigated for the 2019/2020 school year. The goal of a diversified approach to supporting "safe school students" will see us reaching our grade 7-10 students in a fulsome way that proactively aligns wellness and community resources tailored to the needs of each student.

The WCDSB has recently undergone the creation of a well-being strategic plan for 2019-2021 that encompasses the progressive and engaging strategies that we are undertaking in all areas of wellbeing for students and staff of the WCDSB.

### **Recommendation:**

Presented for your information.

**Prepared/Reviewed By:** Loretta Notten  
Director of Education  
Laura Shoemaker  
Superintendent of Learning: Special Education  
Judy Merkel  
Superintendent of Learning: Safe Schools