

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 19, 2021

6:00 pm Teams Meeting

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
CNIB – **Irene Holdbrook, Chair**
Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region
Waterloo Region Family Network – **Sue Simpson**
Members at Large – **Sarah Van Dyke**



**Waterloo Catholic
District School Board**
Quality, Inclusive, Faith Based Education

35 Weber St. W., Unit A
Kitchener, ON, Canada N2H 3Z1
519-578-3660
info@wcdsb.ca



SEAC Committee Meeting Agenda

Date& Time:	May 19, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
Location:	Teams Meeting
Next Meeting:	June 2, 2021
Committee Members: Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Tracey Weiler, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook, Sue Simpson, Sarah Van Dyke	
Administrative Officials: Gerald Foran, Erin Lemak	


1. Opening Prayer Welcome	G. Foran
2. Approval of Agenda Motion by: Seconded:	
3. Declared Pecuniary Interest	
4. Approval of the April 7th Minutes Motion by: Seconded	
5. School System Operational Business 5.1. Special Education Budget 2021-2022	R. King
6. Ministry Updates (10 min) 6.1. RCCDSB letter to the Minister of Education	G. Foran
7. SEAC Committee Functions 7.1. Topics 2021-2022 7.2. Update – Invitations to the Community organizations	G. Foran
8. Policy Advice to the Board	
9. Updates (20 minutes) 9.1. Association Updates	

9.2. Trustee Updates	
10. Pending Items	
11. Adjournment Motion by: Seconded:	
12. Action Items Place Holder	



SEAC Committee Meeting Minutes

Date& Time:	April 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.
Location:	Teams Meeting
Next Meeting:	May 5, 2021
Committee Members: Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Tracey Weiler, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook, Sue Simpson, Sarah Van Dyke	
Administrative Officials: Gerald Foran, Erin Lemak	

1. Opening Prayer Welcome	G. Foran
2. Approval of Agenda Motion by: Karen Kovats Seconded: Kim Murphy	
3. Declared Pecuniary Interest: N/A	
4. Approval of the March 3rd Minutes Motion by: Sue Simpson Seconded: Kim Murphy	
5. School System Operational Business 5.1. WRFN and Experiences of an Exceptional Parent. <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <h3>About WRFN</h3> <p>Sue Simpson Executive Director</p> </div> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-left: 20px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer-driven & peer-developed network • Supporting families and individuals with exceptional needs since 2009 • Built for families, by families </div> </div>	S. Simpson/Cristina Stanger G. Foran

Guiding principles

- No diagnosis or criteria for eligibility
- Support families and individuals through all life stages
- Provide connections to vital resources & to each other



Overarching purpose

- To support the family to support the child
- To identify gaps in our community & work toward creative solutions



Ask A Self-Advocate Program

Cristina Stanger
Self-Advocacy Liaison

- Open ended, client-centred
- Looking at experiences through a different lens
- Forward momentum, hopeful



Experiences as an Exceptional Parent

Ideas that brought us here...



- *Initially, I felt:* the education system is not about me, it's all about my child
- *I've learned:* collaboration between parents and schools is very important
- I observed parents with visible exceptionalities and I wondered what resources are available to them
- A positive experience with a virtual open house for our daycare gave me the idea that my parent-experience could be improved
- **Question:** As an exceptional parent, where is the framework to express my own needs or to request support?




Challenges I have faced...



- The first month of JK: forms, new routines, unanticipated events, new relationships = overload
- Unknowns around communication/interactions with teachers
- Field trip involvement out of reach
- Volunteer expectations were for typical person, problematic when exceptional
- Overwhelm at school functions
- Confusion over protocol that are not explicitly stated eg. drop -off,
- Facial recognition with masks
- Demands on executive function to navigate remote learning



Some suggestions for your consideration...

- **Investigate further.** Eg. Parent survey to gauge areas needing support
- **Create frameworks for inclusion.** Eg. Consider a tick-box on the child's registration form to highlight "I am a parent with special needs" 
- **Provide advance notice.** Eg. Share dates and details about school events allowing families time to consider and request accommodations
- **Re-evaluate** certain processes and events. Eg. mass interviews in gym
- **Open channels to communicate** the needs of the whole family. Eg. have an appointed staff ambassador to support exceptional families



Other things to think about...

- I am just one parent, other parents will have other insights and ideas
- It is hard to communicate the importance of a request without providing context for a family's needs
- Those who acquire a condition, or just a diagnosis, later in life will not have the same advocacy skills as someone who received accommodations in school
- Relying on parent networking for help is not always an easy or accessible option for some families



Take away points...

1. Barriers exist for parents with exceptionalities to fully participate in their children's education process.
2. Children (and parents) could be negatively impacted when there is the expectation that a parent can advocate for them in typical ways or if processes do not include options for accommodations or alternatives.
3. There are ways the education system could become more welcoming and inclusive to exceptional parents which will benefit the whole family and school community.



IMPROVEMENT IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Identify if you are an exceptional parent when student is registered for school
- Equitable experience and inclusivity for exceptional parents
- Bringing the presentation to Student Councils
- Contacting WCDSB Equity Committee and System workflow analyst to inform about SEAC Committee proposals and inquiring about the process that would turn these ideas into action.

5.2. Policy & Procedures for Special Education in Ontario

- [Special Education in Ontario K-gr 12 document](#)

PPM Number	Title	Year
1	Ontario Schools for the Blind and Deaf as Resource Centres	1986
8	Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities	2014
11	Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs	1982
59	Psychological Testing and Assessment of Pupils	1982
76C	Alternative Educational Programs and Services for Deaf, Blind, and Deaf-Blind Exceptional Pupils	1991
81	Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings	1984
89	The Residential Demonstration Schools for Students with Learning Disabilities: General Information and Details of the Referral Process	1990
119	Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools	2013
138	Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools, Grades 1-8	2005
140	Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	2007
141	School Board Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspension	2012
142	School Board Programs for Expelled Students	2012
144	Bullying Prevention and Intervention	2012
145	Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour	2012
149	Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals	2009
151	Professional Activity Days Devoted to Provincial Education Priorities	2011
153	Applications for Temporary Letters of Approval	2010
155	Diagnostic Assessment in Support of Student Learning	2013
156	Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs	2013

159	Collaborative Professionalism	2016	
160	Protected Time for Daily Mathematics Instruction, Grades 1 to 8	2016	
Q&A			
6. Ministry Updates (10 min) 6.1. HPEDSC letter to the Medical Health Officer of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hasting and Prince Edward SEAC committee requesting prioritizing vaccination of both students and staff working with students with high needs. 6.2. Public health announcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public health announcement that staff working with students with high needs will be vaccinated as the priority group. 			G. Foran
7. SEAC Committee Functions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up email invitation to community organizations 			
8. Policy Advice to the Board N/A			
9. Updates (20 minutes) 9.1. Association Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWDSS <u>WWDSS Evening Speaker Series Presents: Executive Functioning</u> PRESENTERS: Hina Mahmood, M.OT, Senior Registered Occupational Therapist and Arianna Coles, M.OT, Registered Occupational Therapist DATE: Tuesday, April 20th, 2021 TIME: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm WHERE: on ZOOM (a zoom link and password will be sent to those who register) COST: Members \$5 each, Non-Members \$15 each Executive functioning is a collection of abilities that allow us to take in, process and use information. Hina and Arianna will discuss the components of executive functioning and how they relate to learning and success in everyday tasks. We'll discuss how you can use supports and strategies to improve an individual's performance in planning, self-monitoring, and carrying-out tasks related to functional independence. Given the current shift to virtual learning in many settings, we will also discuss executive functioning as it relates to virtual learning, and strategies to support learners/facilitate learning in this context. <u>Online Social Skills Group</u> WWDSS is pleased to partner with McLennan Speech & Language Services to offer online social skills groups for members with Down syndrome. Group sessions goals will include responding to questions, initiating questions and communicating together with friends. More details on our website: http://www.wwdss.ca <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRFN 			

Evening of Elegance @home

IN SUPPORT OF WATERLOO REGION FAMILY NETWORK

Join us for this family-
friendly cooking event
in partnership with
The Culinary Studio

Your ticket includes

- Menu: Schwarma Marinated Chicken, Spiced 'Sharia' Rice, NYC White Sauce, Hot Pink Pickled Cabbage & Chocolate loaf
- a basket of fresh ingredients delivered to your door (Feeds family of 4)
- a bottle of wine
- an interactive, step-by-step cooking class

Saturday,
May 29, 2021
5-8pm

For Dietary restrictions to be
honoured, please email Leah at
leah.bowman@wrfn.info by May 1.

Tickets \$200/household

Tickets available at

<https://bit.ly/3rCL5wm>

Ticket sales end May 1



All proceeds remain local and go directly to supporting exceptional families to help them thrive.

[Click to purchase tickets](#)

9.2. Trustee Updates

[WCDSB Board Meeting](#)

10. Pending Items

11. Adjournment

Motion by: Kim Murphy
Seconded: John Gilbert

12. Action Items Place Holder



**Renfrew County
Catholic District
School Board**

499 Pembroke St. West
Pembroke, Ontario
K8A 5P1
1-800-267-0191
(613) 735-1031
FAX: (613) 735-2649
www.rccdsb.edu.on.ca

*...as an inclusive Catholic
educational community, we
are called to express our
mission as church, to pass
on the Good News of Jesus
Christ, to make it relevant in
the world today, and to be
the hope for the future.*

30 March 2021

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

The Honorable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce:

The Renfrew County Catholic District School Board (RCCDSB), in support of a recommendation brought forward to the Board of Trustees by the Special Education Advisory Committee on March 29, 2021, is writing to support Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). This proposed legislation will require all boards of education throughout Ontario to develop policies and guidelines with respect to FASD and require the Ontario College of Teachers and ECE programs to provide training with respect to FASD.

The RCCDSB is one of many school boards who has benefited from increasing staff knowledge on how to support students who are suspected or have a diagnosis of FASD. The RCCDSB multidisciplinary team, which includes Social Workers, School and Attendance Counsellors, Speech and Language Pathologists, Applied Behaviour Analysis Specialists, Safe Schools Coordinator and a Mental Health and Wellness Lead provide school-based assessment and in-school consultation for students with complex behavioural needs, including FASD. The team applies a transdisciplinary approach to assessment, which fosters holistic and person-centered collaboration to develop a plan for intervention that supports skill development and improved function at school.

Thank you for acknowledging our support for Bill 172.

Yours in Catholic Education,

Bob Schreader
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Pat O'Grady
Chair of SEAC

cc: Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association (OCSTA)
Ontario Catholic School Boards
Education Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MASCE)
RCCDSB SEAC