

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Hammarskjold High School
Thunder Bay, Ontario

2020 FEB 26

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Liz Tod (Chair)
Kelly Matyasovszky (Vice Chair)
Trustee George Saarinen
Trustee Sue Doughty-Smith
Mike Otway

Suzanne Posthumus
Cory Koski
Carey Murphy (A)
Lesley Harding (A)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Probizanski

Lori Carson

ABSENT:

Wilma Kleynendorst
Angela Hill
Jennifer Bean

Ashley Etienne (A)
Miranda Myers

GUEST:

David Wright
Derek DiBlasio

Cheri Lappage

1. **Call to Order**

Liz Tod, Chair of SEAC called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

The following additions were made to the agenda:

- 8.7 Labour Update
- 8.8 OHRC Right to Read

Moved by Trustee George Saarinen

Seconded by Cory Koski

“THAT the agenda for the February 26, 2020 SEAC meeting be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

3. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. Presentations

4.1. Budget Presentation

David Wright presented information on the 2020-2021 budget process, and attendees received the following handouts:

- 2020-2021 Guiding Principles
- 2020-2021 Budget Process
- 2019-2020 Special Education Allocation and Expenses
- Special Education Grant Information
- 2019-2020 Education Funding “A Guide to the Special Education Grant”.

Mr. Wright addressed each handout in more detail and responded to members’ questions. Any further questions can be sent to Robin Orr or directly to Mr. Wright.

Mr. Wright was thanked for his presentation.

4.2. Hammar skjold Special Needs

Derek DiBlasio, Administrator of Hammar skjold High School introduced Cheri Lappage, Chair of Hammar skjold High School and gave a brief presentation on special needs supports at the school. Following the presentation, members were given a tour of the special needs facilities in the school.

Mr. DiBlasio was thanked for his presentation and tour.

5. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Mike Otway

Seconded by Suzanne Posthumus

“THAT the minutes of the January 15, 2020 SEAC meeting be approved.”

CARRIED

6. Business Arising From the Minutes

6.1. Equity and Inclusive Education Committee

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education provided an update on the Equity and Inclusive Education Committee (EIEC) and noted a draft terms of reference has been created and will be shared at the March 10, 2020 EIEC meeting. Ms. Probizanski provided an overview of the terms of reference including membership composition, and noted membership has been updated to include representation from SEAC, AEAC and PIC. Ms. Probizanski asked if there was a SEAC member to join the committee. Mike Otway indicated interest. Options will be explored to include an alternate SEAC member, or to have SEAC representation attend on a rotating basis.

Robin Orr will email members to see if others are interested in joining the EIEC.

6.2. 2019-2020 SEAC Work Plan – Review Record of Progress

Liz Tod, Chair of SEAC referred to the 2019-2020 SEAC Workplan included in the meeting package. The following updates were incorporated into the workplan to better align with the work of SEAC:

Goal 5

- Goal changed to: Provide input to organizations, agencies and committees as requested;
- Strategies changed to: Engage with other bodies to support special needs students; and
- Indicators of Success changed to: SEAC engagement requests have been addressed.

Goal 6

- removed

6.3. School Awards

Cory Koski addressed the draft criteria for a SEAC school award included in the meeting package. Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education shared the process of how individuals can apply for an award at a secondary school. Discussion occurred and members agreed the award will be identified as the “SEAC Leadership Award”, and a staff member, coach or other individual who has insight into how the individual meets the criteria of the award will nominate a recipient. Ms. Probizanski noted awards distributed through a nomination process are also included in the secondary award binder available to staff and students. Once the criteria for the new SEAC Leadership Award is finalized, it will be distributed to secondary schools for inclusion in their award binders. Funding to support his award will be through the SEAC annual budget.

An updated criteria will be shared at the March 11, 2020 SEAC meeting.

Moved by Cory Koski

Seconded by Mike Otway

“THAT SEAC approve the implementation of a SEAC Leadership Award beginning spring 2020 in the amount of \$100.00 per secondary school.”

CARRIED

7. Correspondence

The correspondence folder was circulated for member’s perusal.

8. New Business

8.1. Kindergarten Registration Evening Update

Lori Carson, Special Education Officer noted the Kindergarten Registration Evening was a wonderful event and all the students received a Lakehead Public Schools T-Shirt with Graduate 2034 written on the back. Activities were available for children and the event was well attended. Attendees visited the SEAC table to request information.

8.2. Secondary Open House Update

Carey Murphy attended Westgate CVI open house; she found that most people are not aware of SEAC. Members explored ideas that would gain greater exposure for SEAC. Suggestions included:

- having a table during parent / teacher interview nights;
- request elementary schools inform families who have children transitioning to high schools that a SEAC representative will be available at secondary open house; and
- other school events.

Members discussed options to make SEAC more visible on the Board website. Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education will explore options to have reference to SEAC on the main page.

Swag options were discussed; ideas presented included chocolate and magnets. It was further suggested a draw could be held for a nominal gift certificate when SEAC is present at school events.

8.3. Special Education Room Relocation

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education provided an update on the relocation of the special education room from Ecole Gron Morgan (EGM) to Algonquin Avenue (AA). There is a space concern at EGM as they are expanding and there is no room for additional classes. The reasoning is the board wants to ensure needs to support students are in one facility making it easier bridge partnerships with community partners, and for those partners to support special needs students. This planning has been very successful at Westgate and it is expected this change will also be successful for the students.

Activities are being planned through to June 2020 that will allow families and students to be involved in the transition. One on one meetings are being held with parents to address any questions or concerns they may have regarding the transition of their children.

Ms. Probizanski asked members for suggestions on areas they feel need to be considered to support the transition. Liz Tod raised concerns as to how families are affected when decisions to move programs are made, and the optics of a segregated model by moving students from a large school population to a small school. Ms. Tod also asked when making decisions to move such programs in the future that SEAC be asked for

input prior to the decision being made. Ms. Probizanski noted this decision is not meant to segregate students but to offer the best services possible. She further noted, that consultation with SEAC is not always possible when the Board makes a decision however; whenever the opportunity arises for input items will be brought forward to SEAC.

Mike Otway raised concerns about supports for students. Lori Carson noted supports for student who are being transitioned from EGM to AA will move with the students.

Suggestions for the transition of the special needs room can be sent to Robin Orr.

8.4. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education provided an overview of the draft Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan template included in the meeting package and asked for members input. Any feedback can be sent to Robin Orr.

8.5. Parent Advisory Committee (PIC) Report

A report was not provided.

8.6. SEAC/PIC Joint Community Engagement Event

Liz Tod, Chair of SEAC shared an update and noted there hasn't been any feedback on suggested presenters. Through Lori Carson, Dr. Mushquash has agreed to present at a SEAC / PIC Joint Community Engagement Event; date to be determined. Ms. Carson noted she has been working with Dr. Todd Cunningham and will see if there is a possibility of coordinating him as a second speaker at the event. The event will be planned for April / early May and coordinated with PIC. Michelle Probizanski and Robin Orr will work with Ian MacRae and Judy Hill to plan details. Lori Carson will follow up with Dr. Mushquash for potential dates and share with Michelle Probizanski.

8.7. Labour Update

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education provided a labour update noting talks have broken off with unions. Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has moved to phase 6 sanctions. Shortages are experienced throughout the system and these additional sanctions have lead to the board creating contingency plans to support schools. Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) sanctions have not has as much impact on day to day operations of schools.

8.8. OHRC Right to Read

Michelle Probizanski, Superintendent of Education noted a meeting was held on February 25 with lawyers representing OHRC to review submission. The meeting was positive. Lori Carson, AJ Keene and

Mahejabeen Ebrahim were acknowledged for their work on the submission.

Carey Murphy and her son, and Liz Tod and her son were recognized and thanked for speaking at the hearing. Ms. Probizanski noted recommendations are always welcome as it provided an opportunity to explore growth opportunities.

9. Information/Inquires & Association Reports

Cory Koski shared that Shannon Bell, Service Navigator for Autism Ontario has resigned and recruitment is underway for a replacement.

10. Status of SEAC Budget

Liz Tod, Chair of SEAC noted the SEAC budget currently sits at \$6,306.11.

11. Board Update

Item deferred to the March 11, 2020 meeting.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Cory Koski

Seconded by George Saarinen

"THAT we do now adjourn at 8:10 p.m."

CARRIED