

Wellington Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Wednesday, November 18, 2009

MINUTES

Attendance:

SEAC Members: G. Lavalley (Chair), S. Newcombe (Vice-Chair), V. Dupuis, D. Watson, J. Hollen, K. Zamin

Regrets: T. O'Regan

Guests: J. Furfaro, Trustee
M. E. McIlroy, KidsAbility
J. Dal Bello, Principal, Holy Trinity Catholic School
J. Ondercin, Vice-Principal, Holy Trinity Catholic School
J. Goddard, SERT, Holy Trinity Catholic School
S. DiBattista, Teacher, Holy Trinity Catholic School
Student (and family), Holy Trinity Catholic School
T. Jamieson, Speech and Language Pathologist
M. Chimienti, Speech and Language Pathologist

Program Staff: L. Clifford, Superintendent of Education
E. Clinton, Principal of Alternative Education
N. Linforth, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order – G. Lavalley opened the meeting with introductions. L. Clifford led in prayer.

2. Review of SEAC Meeting Minutes – G. Lavalley asked if there were any questions regarding the October minutes – there were no questions.

3. Discussion Items

3.1 Elementary Tier 1 Pupil Presentation – J. Ondercin & J. Goddard

- J. Ondercin introduced the guest family
- J. Goddard presented "Education for All in Action" PowerPoint that included the following areas: Framework, Technology, EQAO, Students as Leaders, A Remembrance Day Project and Poetry:
- SERT works with small groups several times per week, based on learning needs of students, including the following programs: Corrective Reading, Soar to Success, Balanced Literacy and Headsprout
- J. Goddard observed that after 20 years of teaching, technology works
- EQAO results help us to see that technology is working – J. Ondercin noted that from grades 3 to 6, the students score higher (even though the expectations are higher at the grade 6 level)
- J. Goddard noted that once children learn the technology, they are often giving help to other students, rather than needing help themselves
- The Remembrance Day Project for junior grades: teachers taught children about the day and followed with the writing of poetry using Premier software
- Project could not have happened without team work
- By the end of the project, 120 students were familiar with Premier
- Parents can download Premier at home
- The mother of the student present advised that Premier is really helpful with homework, and appreciates the support from the school and the fact that it is targeted to the student

- 3.2 SLP Presentation – T. Jamieson & M. Chimienti**
- M. Chimienti provided handout and gave overview of role of SLP:
 - Majority of time is spent doing assessments through standardized testing
 - Primary goal is to support teachers, determine gaps, successful strategies
 - Work very closely with Educational Assistants (EAs)
 - Past couple of years more feedback sessions where school team is pulled together, including classroom teacher, SERT and parents
 - Respect the need for withdrawal in some cases, but try hard to promote inclusion as it is important for student to develop good modeling skills
 - Inservicing for teachers and EAs done on PD days
 - Work with community agencies to provide collaborative services
- Discussion, questions and answers followed
- T. Jamieson provided overview of intervention strategies:
 - Service delivery model does not allow for direct intervention, most are consultative
 - KidsAbility provides augmentative assessments
 - Look at different assessment tools for developmentally delayed students, ABLLS good for low functioning children
 - Language impairments represent a large part of caseload
- Discussion, questions and answers followed
- 3.3 Attendance Handbook – E. Clinton**
- E. Clinton updated the committee:
 - Issues with students have skyrocketed and we want to act on it and engage students
 - The protocol is being used as a guideline – comments and recommendations are welcome
 - Legal counsel was consulted before the protocol was distributed to schools
 - Three reasons for non-attendance: truancy, school avoidance and school refusal, each of which determine the type of intervention required
 - WCDSB has outlined terms to support administrators and teachers and has appointed a System Attendance Counsellor who acts on a system level
 - Attendance process is married to the school problem solving process and includes the school team, district team, Youth Workers and Social Workers
 - If school has exhausted all possibilities the next step is a home visit by the Social Worker; if that is exhausted the next step is referral to the Attendance Counsellor
 - The Attendance Counsellor acts as liaison between the school, the family and the Superintendent and follows up with recommendations
 - If protection or abuse is an issue, Family & Children's Services is brought in
- 3.4 Protocol for Youth Worker/Social Worker Services – E. Clinton**
- E. Clinton reported the following:
 - WCDSB is clear on the distinction between Social Worker and Youth Worker
 - The role of the Social Worker concentrates on mental health and complex family situations
 - The protocol covers situations where there has been a disclosure of information
 - First and foremost is to involve the family; the Health Act does not issue an age of consent; it is based on the ability to give informed consent
 - V. Dupuis suggested that WCDSB should have a Policy to support (and be referenced in) the protocol
 - SW and YW are required to involve their Principal and team
 - OSR tracking: a card that states the school, year, YW or SW involved and one sentence describing what is being tracked
 - WCDSB has started a log procedure to record each visit with a child – a Principal or teacher can look at the record of visits and determine the need to reevaluate
 - There needs to be a clear delineation between YW and SW – to say that they are interchangeable is not accurate – level of education and training are very different
- 3.5 LDAO Survey – S. Newcombe**
- S. Newcombe advised that LDAO notified that the Parent Association Advisory Committee wanted to do a survey to determine how SEAC is functioning
 - The survey, with answers, was distributed
 - Copy of survey results will be sent to members via email, as well as the link to the survey for parents

4. Correspondence Items

- 4.1 Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs – Survey Results
- 4.2 Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education Meeting Highlights – Oct/09
- 4.3 Ministry of Education Special Education Update – Oct/09
- 4.4 Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario SEAC Circular – Nov/09
- 4.5 KidsAbility Service Delivery Model Project
- 4.6 Student Support Leadership Cluster #26 – Dufferin/Wellington/Peel – Oct/09
- 4.7 Letter to the Minister of Education from Rainy River District SEAC
- 4.8 Letter to the Minister of Education from District School Board North East SEAC
- 4.9 Ministry School Health Support Services Review

5. Open

- G. Lavalley referred to letters from two Boards (SEAC) requesting money for psychological assessments and suggested that we may want to consider the same. L. Clifford advised that he is open to discussion, but would suggest their issues are different from ours. Discussion to be on December agenda. G. Lavalley advised N. Linforth to send copy of two letters to all members.
- L. Clifford advised that he had been asked to recruit a SEAC member to attend an all day Ministry meeting on December 9th. S. Newcombe indicated interest and will confirm via email.
- D. Watson distributed an invitation on behalf of K. Zamin, Autism Ontario. It is an opportunity to mingle with parents and professionals without it being about a specific child.
- G. Lavalley, on behalf of SEAC, thanked D. Watson for being a member and for her support.
- L. Clifford advised that, with permission of Chair, we would like to have a holiday dinner at the next meeting – G. Lavalley agreed.
- G. Lavalley advised that the committee needs to work on keeping the meeting to the agenda timeline; also advised that after presentations would like the opportunity to debrief and talk.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

6. Next Meeting – December 16, 2009