

# SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING



**Date:** Monday, January 17, 2022 – 5:30 P.M.

**Via:** Teams Meeting

## MINUTES

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Autism Ontario – Chatham-Kent Chapter	Tracey Haddy
Children’s Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent	TBD
Community Living Chatham-Kent	Steve Stokley
Community Living Sarnia-Lambton	Rachel Veilleux / Brenda Roby
Community Living Wallaceburg	Ryan Allaer / Wendy Smith
Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County	Kim D’Hooghe
Wellness & Emotional Support for Youth Online	Michelle Parks
Trustees	Carol Bryden Jennifer McCann
Principal Representatives	Frank Torti Lisa Walker
Board Advisors	Lisa Demers Jennifer Morrow Terri Rawlings Chris Preece Lisa Thompson-Power Hollie Sparling
Guests	Sandra Pidduck Chris Kehoe
Regrets	Ryan Allaer
Absent	Rachel Veilleux Kim D’Hooghe Lisa Walker

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Welcome & Opening Prayer
- B. Adoption of SEAC Agenda - January 17, 2022

**MOTION BY Jennifer McCann and seconded by Steve Stokley to adopt the SEAC Agenda of January 17, 2022. CARRIED.**

- C. Review of SEAC Minutes – November 15, 2021

**MOTION BY Jennifer McCann and seconded by Steve Stokley to approve the SEAC Minutes of November 15, 2021. CARRIED**

## 2. PRESENTATIONS

- A. Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario

Sandra Pidduck

- One in every 100 children are diagnosed with Epilepsy. In Chatham-Kent, we average 1.6 out of 100 children, in both elementary and secondary school, who are diagnosed with Epilepsy.
- The definition of a seizure is the misfiring of neurons in the brain. Where the seizure happens in the brain depends on what we see on the outside.
- There has been much stigma associated with seizures in the past. One way to eliminate the stigma is to educate students at a young age. They become more supportive of those with Epilepsy because they become knowledgeable. Children and youth can be critical in supporting peers and informing others who are unaware of what to do if a student has a seizure.
- Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario provides a network of services that educates, supports and builds community awareness for both adults and children. They have Clinic to Community support, a Peer to Peer network, Workplace support and Support Groups for adults. For children, they have Clinic to Community, School to Community, YEP, Wacky Wednesday Summer Camp and Game On. Contact Sandra Pidduck for more information.
- They have a Grade 5 program (part of the curriculum) on Epilepsy and they have a Teacher Toolkit that is shared when they go into a school to support. Parent consent is required for student specific support.
- When going into a school, support is offered in different ways. For example, education on giving rescue meds if/when necessary can be shared. They also like to provide schools with a Seizure Log. It helps to connect the school and the parents with documentation of seizures at school. This helps parents with doctor appointments.
- 50% of kids with Epilepsy have learning difficulties. Seizures can go unnoticed in the classroom. If the student is having a seizure, he/she misses what is being taught at that moment.
- If a seizure goes longer than 5 minutes, it becomes a medical emergency because the chances of the person coming out of it on their own is minimal.
- Depression and anxiety are the biggest comorbid disorders associated with Epilepsy, and it increases as they get older.

## B. Destreaming

Chris Kehoe

- The new de-streamed Grade 9 Math course was implemented in September 2021.
- Beginning in September 2022, all Grade 9 subjects will be offered in one stream.
- If students were going into applied courses previously, they will go into the academic de-streamed courses, starting in September 2022.
- A new Science de-streamed Grade 9 course will be implemented in classrooms beginning in September 2022. It will replace both Grade 9 Academic and Applied Science courses.
- The following courses will be offered using the current Academic course description in September 2022. All of the Applied courses in these subject areas will expire at the end of the 2021-2022 school year and will no longer be offered. The courses are: English, Issues in Canadian Geography, and French as a Second Language.
- The Locally Developed Compulsory Credit Course policy remains unchanged at this time. School boards are to ensure that enrollment does not increase in Locally Developed Compulsory Credit courses as a result of de-streaming.
- Reasons to remove applied level programming include:
  - Limited future pathways for students
  - Over-representation of marginalized populations in applied level classes - up to three times over-represented in Ontario
  - Ontario was the only province to stream, leaving grade 8 before the students entered high school
  - We already have open classes in all grade 9 elective programming
  - Many provincial boards had already cut applied French and Geography in grade 9
  - It allows students one year of high school experience to determine their interests and talents prior to choosing pathways in grade 10
    - Realize they can handle high school - it is not “harder”
    - Experience their new school and the credit system
    - Opportunity to reinvent
    - Exposure to new learning experiences and opportunities for engagement

Most Importantly it sends the message: We believe in you, you can do it, you are in good hands, your future is important, we support you, we care.

## 3. ASSOCIATION REPORTS

### A. Autism Ontario – Chatham-Kent Chapter

Tracey Haddy

- N/A

### B. Children’s Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent

TBD

- N/A



C. Community Living Chatham-Kent

Steve Stokley

- N/A

D. Community Living Sarnia-Lambton

Rachel Veilleux / Brenda Roby

- Continue to work on the new strategic plan.

E. Community Living Wallaceburg

Ryan Allaer / Wendy Smith

- N/A

F. Down Syndrome Association – Lambton County

Kim D’Hooghe

- N/A

G. Wellness & Emotional Support for Youth Online

Michelle Parks

- Continue to work on the new strategic plan
- Built online platform to be more secure

#### 4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

#### 5. NEW BUSINESS

#### 6. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Mental Health and Well Being Update

Chris Preece

- Chris gave a shout out to Michelle Parks who was placed on the Mayor of Sarnia’s Honour Awards in recognition of her work in the community - Congratulations Michelle!
- Chris shared an acknowledgement to our children/students and their exemplary efforts during the pandemic. The passage depicted them as “our little heroes: today, tomorrow, forever.”
- Healthy Ways Week is being celebrated from January 17 - 24, 2022. A placemat with daily themes and ready made activities was shared with staff with the goal of it having an impact on their own mental health and wellbeing.
- Start Well is a new resource for elementary teachers from School Mental Health Ontario. It has five days of ready to use activities. The purpose is for teachers to be able to begin their day with students in a calm way.
- Bell Lets Talk day is next Wednesday, January 26, 2022. We will be promoting it in our schools. The theme being “Just Listen.”
- Youth Voice Conferences were held at both St. Patrick and Ursuline College where school climate survey feedback was shared, and then students were asked for their thoughts on how we can support them to improve their mental health and wellbeing. In future sessions, reports on



common themes from both schools will be shared with the students. An example of a common theme is, "I thought I was the only one feeling this way."

- Virtual Drop In's took place during remote learning and will be transferred into physical drop in's in cohorts in schools, now that in-person learning has resumed. The drop in will constitute a light discussion to check in with students about anxiety and fears with regard to the pandemic. The role of the well-being group facilitator is to "just listen." The message to students is 'what is said in the group, stays in the group.'
- Social Emotional Learning Through a Trauma/Resilience Informed Lens with Kim Schonert-Richl leading and supporting our team through our process. This community of practice will attempt to shift our system to a trauma resilience lens. The goal is to build on strengths, looking at the development of embedding system wide social emotional skills through a trauma informed lens, starting with self awareness.

#### B. Remote Learning / In-Person Learning Update

Jennifer Morrow

- Students with special needs were supported by school teams during remote learning. Students had access to all special education staff during remote learning.
- Students with complex special needs who could not access remote learning were invited to attend in person. The final numbers of special needs students who attended in person during remote learning were 55 elementary students and 25 secondary students.
- Learning resources were shared with parents during remote learning to support the students.

#### C. Gr. 8-9 Transitions and Secondary to Post-Secondary Transitions Hollie Sparling

- A review of Grade 8-9 transition practices to support students with special needs took place. Practices regarding transition packages, enhanced transition meetings, regular transition meetings, the transfer of SEA equipment and at-risk learner profiles were reviewed and updated, all with a de-streaming lens.
- A next step will be to share the information with the PRT group at an upcoming PRT meeting. The expectation will be that PRTs share the information when discussing the transition to high school with families and students. As well, PRTs will be expected to put their new learning into practice when creating and implementing IEPs for students.
- There will also be a virtual "Grade 8-9 Transition Information Night for Parents & Caregivers" which will outline the transition process for all students with an IEP, by the Special Education Department.
- A review of accommodations in post-secondary institutions for students with special needs took place. Accommodations are accessible at the post-secondary level for students with special needs provided the required medical documentation is provided.
- Examples of student needs that may be considered for accommodations include: attention disabilities, brain injury, hearing loss, learning disabilities, medical disabilities, mental health or psychiatric disabilities, physical/functional disabilities, vision loss and temporary disabilities.
- Most post-secondary institutions require a formal diagnosis to be considered for accommodations.



- Examples of accommodations that may be available typically include: extra time for exams and/or assignments, memory aids, the ability to reschedule exams if a condition flares up, typed or handwritten scribing, access to alternate formats of course materials, use of FM systems, permission to record lectures, and assistive technology.
- Students and parents can access [www.transitionresourceguide.ca](http://www.transitionresourceguide.ca) for more information about accommodations available in post-secondary institutions.

## 7. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

- Decisions were made to delay the return to school
- The Board is supporting teachers, students and families with remote learning and now with in-person learning
- The Board is supporting proper health protocols, PPE, and the distribution of RAT tests made available from the Ministry

## 8. QUESTIONS ASKED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Brenda Roby voiced her appreciation and gratitude toward all frontline staff as well as all other board support staff and teams for their tremendous efforts in supporting students and families throughout the pandemic. Brenda acknowledged the amount of time and effort that is spent ensuring staff, students, and families remain supported and safe at both home and school while we pivot back and forth from in-person learning to remote learning and vice versa. Brenda voiced the importance of ALL staff hearing and receiving this message.

## 9. PRESENTATIONS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Sandra Pidduck from Epilepsy Southwestern Ontario offered to do a presentation to SEAC on Rescue Medications

## 10. FUTURE MEETING DATES

February 28, 2022

March 21, 2022

April 25, 2022

May 16, 2022

June 20, 2022

## 11. CLOSING PRAYER

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Carol Bryden formally adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

**Motion By Jennifer McCann and seconded by Brenda Roby. CARRIED**