

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 7:00 pm
Trustees' Committee Room
133 Greenbank Road
Ottawa, Ontario

- Members:** Cathy Miedema (Association for Bright Children), Lori-Anne Bradley (FESD/ONE, electronic communication), Allison Bunney (Community Representative, electronic communication), Susan Cowin (Community Representative, electronic communication), Sonja Elliot (Autism Ontario, Ottawa Chapter), Johanna MacCormick (Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC, electronic communication), Dr. Maggie Mamen (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C), Mike Marta (Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton, Alternate), Hoda Seens (Community Representative), Terry Warner (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, electronic communication), Jess Whitley (Inclusion Action in Ontario), Donna Dickson (Trustee, electronic communication), Nili Kaplan-Myrth (Trustee), Lynn Scott (Trustee)
- Association Representatives (Non Voting):** Connie Allen (OSSTF, PSSP, electronic communication, Nancy Dlouhy (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee), Kimberly Elmer (Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators' Network), Jennifer Titley (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation), Andrew Winchester (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Alternate)
- Staff and Guests:** Suzanne Nash (Trustee), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Stacey Kay (Manager of Learning Support Services), Deborah Lyon (System Principal, Learning Support Services), Christine Kessler (Principal), Mike Fairbrother (Program Evaluation Officer), Mellissa Applewaithe (Board/Committee Coordinator)

1. Call to Order

Chair Miedema called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands

Chair Miedema acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and thanked the Algonquin people for hosting the meeting on their land.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Superintendent Symmonds requested that Item 8.3 be moved to Item 8.1.

Moved by Trustee Kaplan-Myrth,

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

Carried

4. Review of Special Education Advisory Committee Report

4.1 SEAC Report, 1 February 2023

Moved by Ms. Mamen,

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee Report dated 1 February 2023 report be received.

Carried

4.2 Forward Agenda

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) forward agenda was provided for information.

Superintendent Symmonds noted that he anticipates providing an update on de-streaming at the 5 April 2023 SEAC meeting.

5. Matters for Action

5.1 Report 23-005, Revisions to Policy P.019.GOV Special Education Advisory Committee (J. McCoy)

Superintendent Symmonds reported on the proposed revision to Policy P.019.GOV Special Education Advisory Committee, noting that the purpose is to revise the policy to provide opportunity for the appointment of up to two voting members to represent Indigenous students with special educational needs to SEAC.

Members agreed that revisions to the policy should continue to the Board for approval.

6. Presentations

6.1 Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (Maggie Mamen)

Ms. Mamen provided a presentation on the Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C) that gave an overview of the services and supports that the charity offers.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- The Learning Disabilities Association of Ottawa-Carleton (LDAO-C) offers programs and resources to help children, youth, adults and families deal effectively with the challenges of learning disabilities (LD) and attention deficit hyperactive disorders (ADHD);
- Access to resource withdrawal, small group instruction, individual tutoring are effective support options as opposed to system classes or indirect classroom support;
- Timely assessment, early identification, and relevant, targeted intervention can mitigate educational challenges; and
- The LDAO-C offers eight online programs and a summer camp.

7. Department Update

7.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Symmonds provided his report.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) is required to present an academic staffing report to the Board by the end of March 2023;
- The School Year Calendar approved by the Board will be submitted to the Ministry for approval;
- World Autism Awareness Month begins in April 2023; and
- Superintendent Symmonds noted that he would follow-up at a future meeting on a Ministry of Education (MOE) funding amount of \$8.32 million that is to be distributed to school boards to support early intervention in math.

7.2 Special Education Plan (Standards)

a. Early Identification Procedures/Intervention Strategies

Manager Kay provided an overview of the Early Identification Procedures/Intervention Strategies Standard.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- The purpose of the Standard is to provide details of the Board's Early Identification Procedures and Intervention Strategies to the Ministry and the public;
- The OCDSB takes a collaborative approach when establishing support for multilingual learners (MLs) and uses a systematic focused process to determine each student's needs;
- The OCDSB uses a tiered approach for early identification and intervention; and
- The OCDSB has made significant operational changes to the kindergarten entry process to provide families with a warm, welcoming experience.

7.3 Review of the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) at Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey Public School

Principal Kessler and Program Evaluation Officer Fairbrother provided a report to update the committee on the progress of work undertaken on the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) review for the Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey Public School.

During discussion and in response to queries, the following information was provided:

- Surveys developed by the program evaluation team were translated into Arabic and Somali, which are the predominant languages following English at the Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education and Clifford Bowey Public School;
- The surveys were responded to by over 50% of parents and caregivers, 53% of classroom teachers and 67% of Educational Assistants (EAs);
- The surveys were compiled after consultation with parents/caregivers and the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA); and
- The impact of COVID-19 was considered during the compilation of the surveys.

8. Committee Reports

8.1 Board

There was no report from the Board.

8.2 Committee of the Whole

Ms.Mamen provided a report on the Committee of the Whole.

8.3 Committee of the Whole, Budget

Mr. Warner provided a report from the Committee of the Whole Budget Meeting.

9. New Business

There was no new business.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Cathy Miedema, Chair, Special
Education Advisory Committee