



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-01
 MS Teams Meeting / Streamed
 Thursday, September 17, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

Land Acknowledgement

The Grand Erie District School Board recognizes the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe people, as the traditional peoples of this territory. We acknowledge and give gratitude to the Indigenous peoples for sharing these lands in order for us to continue our work here today.

AGENDA

Time	Item	Info.	Dia.	Res.	Responsibility
A-1 Opening					
6:00	(a) Welcome/ Land Acknowledgement Statement	√			T. Waldschmidt
	(b) Roll Call			√	P. Curran
	(c) Agenda Additions/ Deletions/ Approvals		√	√	T. Waldschmidt
B-1 Timed Items					
	(a) Update – Summer School Transition Program, SEA Summer Camps and Summer Support for Vulnerable Students and Families	√	√		S. Slaman/L. Boudreault/P. Bagchee
C-1 Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings					
	(a) Ratification of Minutes June 18, 2020 Meeting #1*			√	T. Waldschmidt
	(b) Ratification of Minutes June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 *			√	T. Waldschmidt
	(c) i. SEAC Schedule of Meetings 2020-21* ii. SEAC Meetings 2020-21 – Virtual vs. Face-to-Face * iii. Protocol for Accessing the Education Centre for SEAC Members *	√	√	√	L. Thompson
D-1 New Business					
	(a) Special Education Funding for COVID-19 Supports *	√	√		L. Thompson/P. Bagchee
	(b) Special Education and Grand Erie’s Virtual Academy	√			L. Thompson
	(c) Consultation – SO31 Accessibility *	√	√		K. Mertins
	(d) Learner Intervention Tracking for Excellence (LITE) *	√	√		L. Thompson
E-1 Other Business					
	(a) SEAC Representative to Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee *	√	√	√	L. Thompson
	(b) Public Consultation for Grand Erie’s Special Education Plan *	√	√		L. Thompson
	(c) SEAC Membership Update	√	√		



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-01
 MS Teams Meeting / Streamed
 Thursday, September 17, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

Time	Item	Info.	Dia.	Res.	Responsibility
F-1 Standing Items					
	(a) Policy/Procedures Out for Comment FT105 – Playground Equipment *	√			L. Thompson
G-1 Information Items					
	(a) None				
H-1 Community Updates					
	(a) None				
I-1 Correspondence					
	(a) LDAO SEAC Circular – Not available				
	(b) Ltr – CSC Nouvelon re Current Status of MACSE June 10, 2020 *	√			T. Waldschmidt
	(c) Ltr – HPEDSB re Class Sizes and Online Options Feb 14, 2020 *	√			T. Waldschmidt
J-1 Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning					
			√		T. Waldschmidt
K-1 Next Meeting					
	Thursday, October 15, 2020 TBD	√			T. Waldschmidt
L-1 Adjournment					
	Meeting adjourned at p.m.			√	T. Waldschmidt

Note: Column Abbreviations

- * Attachments to the agenda
- Info. Item for information only
- Dia. Item for dialogue
- Res. Item for resolution or recommendation
- SEMT Special Education Management Team

AGENDA ITEM(S)

Standing:

- LDAO SEAC Circular September, November, February, April and June (as available).



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

SEAC Members

Present: Chair T. Waldschmidt, L. Boswell, P. Boutis, B. Caers, C. Clattenburg, R. Collver, L. DeJong, K. Jones, W. Rose, CA Sloat, J. Trovato, T. Wilson.

Regrets: C. Brady, M. Carpenter, N. Schuur, L. Scott, R. Winter.

Resource Staff

Present: P. Bagchee, L. Boudreault, K. Mertins, L. Sheppard, L. Thompson, J. White.

Recorder: P. Curran.

Guests: J. Gemmill, ITS Staff

A-1 Opening **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) Welcome T. Waldschmidt

Chair Waldschmidt welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order, read the Land Acknowledgement Statement and sent good wishes for the continuation of health and wellness to members and their families.

(b) Chair Waldschmidt conducted the roll call.

(c) Agenda Additions / Deletions / Approvals T. Waldschmidt

Moved by: J. Trovato
Seconded by: L. Boswell

“THAT the SEAC 19-09 Agenda for June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

B-1 Timed Items **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) None.

C-1 Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) Ratification of Minutes May 14, 2020 Meeting #1

i. L. Thompson requested the following amendments:

1. Change the meeting date to May 14, 2020, Meeting #1

2. A-1 i. Change the date of the motion approving the agenda to May 14, 2020, Meeting #1

3. L-1 Change the date of adjournment to May 14, 2020, Meeting #1



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

Moved by: R. Collver
 Seconded by: L. Boswell

“THAT the SEAC 19-07 Minutes of May 14, 2020 Meeting #1 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

- (b) Ratification of Minutes May 14, 2020 Meeting #2 T. Waldschmidt
- i. L. Thompson requested the following amendments:
1. Change the meeting date to May 14, 2020, Meeting #2
 2. D-1 (a) – end the fourth paragraph following the word utilized.
 3. D-1 (b) – change the second paragraph to read, “School administrators reported on their observations of Tier One practices in the classroom and shared that teachers are now asking questions about further Tier 1 supports for their students before considering Tier 2 strategies and supports.”
 4. D-1 (b) – change the third paragraph to read, “Special Education staff are involved in Multidisciplinary Team meetings and working with Kindergarten educator teams will be a focus next year.
 5. L-1 Change the date of adjournment to May 14, 2020, Meeting #2.

Moved by: K. Jones
 Seconded by: J. Trovato

“THAT the SEAC 19-07 Minutes of May 14, 2020 Meeting #2 be approved as amended.”

CARRIED

- (c) Distance Learning – Consultation Question L. Thompson

Superintendent Thompson advised the questions were designed to help staff improve upon the model currently in place.

- i. Members were asked to identify, “Which elements of ‘learn from home’ were most valuable to students with special needs?”

This method really helped students remain engaged and helped keep the teacher faces familiar.

- ii. Members were asked to identify, “Where could we focus more effort to improve the ‘learn from home’ model for students with special needs?”

One member thought this was a very defined way of providing special education with no connection to the Educational Assistant and no support in the regular classroom for students with special education needs.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

One member advised her child's teacher they were downloading academic material on their own that they felt was more appropriate for their child.

Members expressed concern there may be a gap in support for students with special needs in regular classes versus those in special education classes.

One member shared her child was very intelligent but felt anxiety when his teacher attempted to connect with video, even in small groups. Her child would chat with the video turned off.

One member advised her child had no video contact with the teacher or classmates and asked if this was consistent across schools or teachers.

Concern was expressed that many students would be unable to fully participate successfully in distance learning due to insufficient internet connections.

Trustee Collver thanked members for their feedback and reminded everyone this was 'crisis teaching' which was put together very quickly. She commended teaching and support staff for embracing this model so quickly and hopes to hear from more parents on how it can be further improved for more students.

Superintendent Thompson advised the board is looking at developing a consistent model with input from the Ministry and collaboration with our federations and other partners.

She asked members to send any further comments or questions to the Recording Secretary.

D-1 New Business

T. Waldschmidt

(a) Summer Support for Vulnerable Students and Families

P. Bagchee

a. Summer Support for Vulnerable Students and Families P. Bagchee

Grand Erie received funds from the Ministry of Education which allows school mental health services to continue during July and August.

Mental Health Services in the summer months will include:

- Ongoing wellness checks with students.
- New referrals to support students and families with coping and crisis intervention and management.
- Support for secondary students attending summer school and elementary students attending Camp Sail.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

- Support for students and families as part of returning to school.
- Liaise with community mental health agencies and hospitals.

(b) Summer School Transitions Program J. White/L. Sheppard

i. Summer Learning Special Education Program

Students from Senior Kindergarten to grade 3 will have the opportunity to attend a face to face program to help them transition back to school.

The program will operate at schools where staff has volunteered, i.e., will be paid, but no expectation to take the position, to run it with a minimum of three to a maximum of eight students. If there is sufficient staff and students a large school may host two sessions.

Special education staff is asking schools to select students who need Tier 1 or Tier 2 support and focusing on those students who will benefit from a short program with an intensive focus on supporting them to develop skills in self-regulation and social-emotional learning.

As well as helping the students, the process will enable staff to develop best practices to share with classroom teachers.

A Principal and Vice-Principal will be hired to oversee the program and provide support. Each program will have a transition teacher and a partner who is either an Educational Assistant or a Designated Early Childhood Educator.

ii. LearnStyle Virtual SEA Camp Grades 4 to 8 L. Boudreault

In addition to the face to face camp, LearnStyle is offering summer camps to run as a team format to help students transition back to school.

One camp is for students with SEA computers teamed with technology coaches who will ensure their technology works properly with no glitches. The day will include socializing and technical support.

The virtual coding camp offers an option for beginners and another for those more experienced. Technology coaches will ensure the students equipment is working properly, provide coding lessons, practice and social time. Students in this camp must be able to follow directions.

Members were provided with a power point presentation on School Mental Health Supports, Summer School Transitions Program and LearnStyle models. This document will be shared with SEAC members.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

- | | | |
|------------|--|-----------------------|
| E-1 | Other Business | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | Membership Update | L. Thompson |
| | T. Buchanan, Community Living Brant, has sent an application to become a member of SEAC. A Board report will request approval of her application. | |
| F-1 | Standing Items | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | None. | |
| G-1 | Information Items | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | None. | |
| H-1 | Community Updates | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | None. | |
| I-1 | Correspondence | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | Ltr Halton CDSB re: MACSE Jun 8 2020 | |
| | This letter expressed concern that although four positions have been filled, there are still seven vacancies. | |
| | J. Trovato advised members he is still an active member of MACSE and that there are ongoing discussions with the Ministry of Education to ensure all constituents are at the table. It is a slow process as it requires thorough background searches to determine appropriateness of applicants. | |
| | Vice-Chair Rose asked that Grand Erie DSB SEAC send a letter of support on Halton CDSB concern about the vacancies. | |
| | She and Chair Waldschmidt will draft a letter for committee approval. | |
| J-1 | Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | This will be discussed at June 18, 2020 Meeting #2. | |
| K-1 | Next Meeting | T. Waldschmidt |
| (a) | Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting 2 MS Teams following adjournment of Meeting #1. | |



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-09

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 – 6:00 p.m.

L-1

Adjournment

T. Waldschmidt

Moved by: K. Jones
Seconded By: J. Trovato

“THAT the SEAC 19-09 meeting of June 18, 2020 Meeting #1 be
adjourned at 7:04 p.m.”

CARRIED



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-10

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 – 7:05 p.m.

MINUTES

SEAC Members

Present: Chair T. Waldschmidt, L. Boswell, P. Boutis, B. Caers, C. Clattenburg, R. Collver, L. DeJong, K. Jones, W. Rose, CA Sloat, J. Trovato, T. Wilson.

Regrets: C. Brady, M. Carpenter, N. Schuur, L. Scott, R. Winter.

Resource Staff

Present: P. Bagchee, L. Boudreault, K. Mertins, L. Sheppard, L. Thompson, J. White.

Recorder: P. Curran.

Guests: J. Gemmill, ITS Staff

A-1 Opening **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) Welcome T. Waldschmidt

Chair Waldschmidt welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order at 7:05 and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

(b) Chair Waldschmidt conducted the roll call.

(c) Agenda Additions / Deletions / Approvals T. Waldschmidt

Moved by: K. Jones
Seconded by: L. Boswell

“THAT the SEAC 19-10 Agenda for June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

B-1 Timed Items **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) None.

C-1 Business Arising from Minutes and/or Previous Meetings **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) None.

D-1 New Business **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) 2020-21 Special Education Draft Budget L. Thompson

The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) has not yet been released.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-10

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 – 7:05 p.m.

The proposed special education budget that was shared in your agenda package is broken into several categories, e.g., staffing, program, professional service providers, etc.

This budget is still in draft form as it has not yet received board approval.

The increase for technological refresh represents a pooled amount as larger budget makes it easier to order technology in a more streamlined manner.

The Literacy Intervention was increased continue to support the purchase a number of Lexia licences for all elementary schools and some secondary schools.

The Learning Opportunities Grant provided to schools identified as compensatory was previously used to support students with needs based on socio-economic status. Moving forward the funds will be allocated to schools to support student learning opportunities with a focus on academic press.

The Physical Activities budget was originally allocated to schools to provide swimming activities for classes of students with developmental challenges. Over the years, individual classes were allowed to add other activities, such as yoga, horseback riding, and snowshoeing, etc. The Grand Erie Games provides opportunities for students to participate in Special Olympics type activities in a one day event hosted by a secondary school. The games have become an annual event and promote leadership opportunities for staff and students in the host school.

Phonological Screening budget is new. The purpose of this budget line is to provide funds to begin to develop a tool for early phonological screening. Field trips to other school boards was delayed by the onset of COVID 19 and staff are hoping this process can be digitized to produce data that can be used more easily.

The budget for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been overspent so it is now trued up to show actual spending.

In response to the two budget lines for self-contained classes, it was explained that there are two different amounts each class gets from these budgets. Line 149 provides \$250 for each class and Line 245 provides \$700 per class.

The Recording Secretary will send a revised budget meeting schedule to SEAC members.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-10

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 – 7:05 p.m.

- (b) Proposed Schedule of SEAC Meetings 2020-21 T. Waldschmidt

Members discussed the benefit of virtual meetings during the winter to reduce the risk of winter driving.

Members would like to continue some meetings in person as they tend to provide opportunities for socializing.

SEAC determined the September, December, January, February and March meetings will be virtual and the October, November, April, May and June will be actual.

An approved schedule will be sent to SEAC and the Executive Assistant to the Board of Trustees.

- E-1 Other Business T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None. L. Thompson

- F-1 Standing Items T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None.

- G-1 Information Items T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None.

- H-1 Community Updates T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None.

- I-1 Correspondence T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) LDAO SEAC Circular

Trustee Collver noted all items in the circular were met by Grand Erie SEAC at tonight's meeting.

- J-1 Future Agenda Items and SEAC Committee Planning T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) Parent Roadmap Revision and Questions for Parent Feedback T. Waldschmidt

This matter will be brought to SEAC in September for review.

- K-1 Next Meeting T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) Thursday, September 17, 2020 | MS Teams | 6:00 p.m.



Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 19-10

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 – 7:05 p.m.

L-1

Adjournment

T. Waldschmidt

Moved by: R. Collver

Seconded By: P. Boutis

“THAT the SEAC 19-09 meeting of June 18, 2020 Meeting #2 be adjourned at 7:33 p.m.”

CARRIED

Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC Schedule of Meetings



All meetings will be held on Thursday nights beginning at 6:00 p.m.

1. Where meetings are virtual, a live stream will be provided on the Grand Erie DSB special education page.
2. Physical meetings are scheduled tentatively at the Education Centre, pending direction from health care advisories which may require changing to a virtual meeting.

2020 – 2021 Meeting Dates
<p>Sep 17, 2020 MS Teams Virtual Meeting ^{1.}</p>
<p>Oct 15, 2020 Board Room of the Education Centre at 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford ^{2.}</p>
<p>Nov 19, 2020 Board Room of the Education Centre at 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford ^{2.}</p>
<p>Dec 17, 2020 MS Teams Virtual Meeting ^{1.}</p>
<p>Jan 21, 2021 MS Teams Virtual Meeting ^{1.}</p>
<p>Feb 18, 2021 MS Teams Virtual Meeting ^{1.}</p>
<p>Mar 11, 2021 MS Teams Virtual Meeting ^{1.}</p>
<p>Apr 15, 2021 Board Room of the Education Centre at 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford ^{2.}</p>
<p>May 20, 2021 Board Room of the Education Centre at 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford ^{2.}</p>
<p>Jun 17, 2021 Board Room of the Education Centre at 349 Erie Avenue, Brantford ^{2.}</p>

Special Education Funding for COVID-19 Supports

Provincial Funding

Special Education	\$132 228
Mental Health	\$134 806
Mental Health	\$134 806

Federal Funding

Special Education and Mental Health Supports	\$166 785
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We have a total of \$568 625 of funding.

Proposed Budget items:

Special Education	Lexia licences – approximately \$100 000
Mental Health	2.5 FTE Social Workers 2.0 FTE Child and Youth Workers Enhanced learning – Supports for students at risk of suspension JK-3



POLICY

SO31

Accessibility

Board Received: September 26, 2016
Review Date: October 2020**Policy Statement**

Grand Erie District School Board provides accessibility accommodations that foster independence, equity of opportunity, dignity and respect for students, parents/guardians, employees and the community.

The Accessibility Policy embeds the policies of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), which includes mandatory accessibility standards that identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in five areas: Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, and Design of Public Spaces.

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – Accessibility training for employees
– Adherence to standards set out in the AODA

Legal Framework

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR), Ontario Regulation 191/11
Ontario Human Rights Code
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56

Procedures

1. Training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities will be provided when required. Employees who develop the Board's policies and procedures and those who interact with the community or other third parties on behalf of the Board shall receive training with respect to any changes to the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) as needed.
2. All employees will be provided with Accessibility Awareness Training. A record of the training, including the names of those trained and the dates on which the training was provided, shall be kept.

Board employees will consider the impact on persons with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, developing or building new spaces, designing new systems, planning a new initiative and providing accessible means of transportation where deemed appropriate.

3. A feedback process will be created that will review the implementation of this policy with the Board's various constituency groups.
4. The Board will maintain the Accessibility Committee as per Bylaw 8 in order to prepare a multi-year accessibility plan, with annual progress reports.
 - 4.1 The Board will establish a process for consulting with employees who have a role in implementing the expectations and procedures established under this policy to review its effectiveness.
5. The Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual (Appendix A), shall be followed, and used for training and daily operation.

Definitions

Disability:

Disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time.

Accessibility:

Accessibility is defined as that which enables people to achieve their full potential.

Barrier:

A "barrier" means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, policy or a practice; ("obstacle")

Accommodation:

An accommodation is a means, through reasonable efforts, of preventing and removing – in a timely manner - barriers that impede individuals with disabilities from participating fully in the services of the Board.

Board Resources

Policy SO14 – Equity and Inclusive Education

Procedure SO 124 – Use of Service Dogs in Schools

SO31 Accessibility – Appendix A



Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

September 2016

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1.0 Introduction to Accessibility Awareness

1.1 Legal Framework

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), S.O. 2005, CHAPTER 11
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11
- Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER H.19
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56

1.2 Related Policies/Procedures

- Policy SO31 Accessibility
- Policy SO14 – Equity and Inclusive Education
- Procedure SO124 – Use of Service Dogs in Schools

2.0 Customer Service Standards

2.1 Monitoring and Feedback on Accessible Customer Service

- 2.1.1 The Chair of the Accessibility Committee will maintain a process for collecting feedback on Accessibility – Customer Service Standards that has the following components:
- 2.1.2 Information on the Board and school websites inviting users of Board services to provide feedback on their experience with, or concerns about, access to services for people with disabilities.
- 2.1.3 Printed information available through school offices and public offices of the Board to invite people with disabilities to provide feedback on their experience with, or concerns about, accessibility of services. Consideration must be given to providing information in alternate formats.
- 2.1.4 Information on how the Board will respond to feedback.
- 2.1.5 Methods of feedback:
- a) A range of methods for soliciting feedback is employed to ensure optimum access to the feedback process by people with disabilities.
 - b) Methods include Board/school websites, e-mail, verbal input, social media, a suggestion box or a feedback card. Accessibility concerns are directed to the Board’s Accessibility Committee by site administrators.
 - c) The feedback process should include the title(s) of the person(s) responsible for receiving feedback and indicate how the Board’s response to the feedback will be made known.
- 2.1.6 Proactive measures for accessible customer service:
- a) To ensure ongoing efficient and effective adherence to Accessibility – Customer Service Standards, Board staff, will take into account the impact on people with disabilities when purchasing new equipment, designing new systems or planning a new initiative.

2.2 Use of a Service Dog By The General Public

2.2.1 Recognizing service dogs:

A service dog is an animal that is being used because of a person’s disability and this is either readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a regulated health care provider.

Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who have vision loss, hearing-alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety. The customer service standard's provisions also apply to animals providing other services to people with disabilities. It is "readily apparent" that an animal is a service dog when it is obvious by its appearance or by what it is doing. For example, it may be readily apparent that an animal is a service dog if it is wearing a harness, saddlebags, a sign that identifies it as a service dog if it has a certificate or identification card from a service animal training school or an identification card from the Attorney General of Ontario. It may also be readily apparent if a person is using the animal to assist him or her in doing things, such as opening doors or retrieving items.

2.2.2 Responsibilities:

- a) Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service dog.
- b) Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a service dog will be welcomed on Board premises with his or her service dog and may be accompanied by the service dog while on the premises. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
- c) This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or Board offices where the public does not have access.
- d) This procedure deals solely with the individual's right to be accompanied by a service dog. Access to classrooms for service dog used by students and staff is covered under separate procedures (SO124 – Use of Service Dogs).

2.2.3 Exclusion of Service Dog:

- a) A service dog can only be excluded from access to the premises where this is required by another law. Examples include the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act. The former Act prohibits service animals in places where food is prepared, processed, or handled (e.g., kitchen of school cafeteria or culinary arts classroom) although service dogs are permitted where food is served and sold (e.g. school cafeteria or lunchroom).
- b) Where there is a risk to the health and safety of another person as a result of the presence of a service dog, consideration must be given to options available prior to exclusion of a service dog. An example would be a situation where an individual has a severe allergy to the service dog. It is the Board's expectation that the situation be fully analyzed and all measures to eliminate the risk be considered, e.g., creating distance between the two individuals concerned, making reasonable alterations to schedules, etc.
- c) A service animal dog can be excluded if it is of a breed that is prohibited by law. An example would be the Ontario Dog Owners' Liability Act, which places restrictions on pit bull terriers.

- d) In the rare instance where a service dog must be excluded, the Board must make every effort to put alternative arrangements in place to provide the services required by the person with a disability. This could involve leaving the service dog in a secure area where it is permitted by law and discussing with the person how best to serve her/him, e.g., a person with a vision disability might need someone (a member of staff or volunteer) to guide her/him.

2.2.4 Confirming the Status of a Service Dog:

- a) At times it may be necessary to confirm that an animal is a service dog. Where an animal is not a trained guide dog and it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service dog, the school or Board staff member may request a letter from an Ontario regulated health professional, e.g., a physician or nurse confirming that the employee requires a service dog because of a disability. The letter does not need to identify the disability, why the dog is needed or how it is used.
- b) Where the person using the service animal regularly attends at the school or Board facility, the principal or departmental manager may request to keep a copy of the letter on file but only as long as required by the circumstances.
- c) Alternatively, the person using the service animal may be asked to produce a letter on occasions when visiting the premises. The principal or departmental manager shall preserve the confidentiality of the letter and information contained in the letter, and shall not use or disclose the letter or information except as provided for in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, cM56, or as otherwise required by law.

****Please refer to Procedure SO124 “Use of Service Dogs” for parameters to be followed when considering the use of a service dog by a student or an employee of the board at a school site.**

2.3 Use of Support Persons by the General Public

- 2.3.1 A support person is a person who assists or interprets for a person with a disability who accesses the services of the Board. A support person is distinct from a Board employee who provides support services to a student or staff person – separate and specific procedures apply. A support person is an individual chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services. Personal care needs may include, but are not limited to, physically transferring an individual from one location to another or assisting an individual with eating or using the washroom. Medical needs may include, but are not limited to, monitoring an individual’s health or providing medical support by being available in the event of a seizure. The support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend or a family member.
- 2.3.2 Supervisory Officers, Principals and Managers will ensure that staff members receive training in interacting with people with disabilities who are accessing Board services accompanied by a support person.
- 2.3.3 Access to Board premises and school events:
 - a) Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be welcomed on Board premises with his or her support person. Access will be in accordance with normal security procedures.
 - b) This requirement applies only to those areas of the premises where the public or third parties customarily have access and does not include places or areas of the school or Board offices where the public does not have access.
 - c) Where an individual with a disability who is accompanied by a support person wishes to attend a school, Family of Schools or Board-organized event for which a fee is charged, the notice of the event will include information as to whether support persons will be charged a fee and specify the amount of the fee.

- d) The Board may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

NOTE: This would be a rare situation and would only occur where, after consultation with the person with the disability, requiring a support person is the only means available to allow the person to be on the premises and, at the same time, fulfill the Board's obligations to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or of others on the premises.

It is further noted that people with disabilities are free to accept a reasonable risk of injury to themselves just as other people do. Different individuals will have a different tolerance for risk. Risk should be weighed against any benefit for the person with a disability. It is not enough that the support person might help to protect health and safety; a support person must be necessary or essential to protect health and safety before one may be required – the risk cannot be eliminated or reduced by other means. Any considerations in protecting health or safety should be based on specific factors and not on assumptions. Just because someone has a disability doesn't mean he/she not capable of meeting health or safety requirements.)

2.3.4 Confidentiality

- a) Where a support person is accompanying a person with a disability, who is not the parent/guardian of a student, for the purpose of assisting in a discussion that may involve confidential information concerning the student, the Superintendent of Education, principal or other staff member must first secure the consent of the parent/guardian regarding such disclosure.
- b) Consent to the disclosure of confidential information in the presence of the support person must be given in writing by the parent or guardian. (See Appendix A Consent Form for Student Support Person).
- c) The support person must also provide assurance in writing to safeguard the confidentiality of information disclosed in the discussion.
- d) A copy of the signed consent document will be retained in the school/Board office.
- e) If the parent/guardian uses a different support person for subsequent meetings, a new signed consent will be required.

2.4 Use of Assistive Devices by the General Public

- 2.4.1 Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that staff are trained to support parents and the general public who may use assistive devices while accessing Board services.
- 2.4.2 Training is focused on how to interact with people using assistive devices rather than on the technical use of the assistive devices. (See Appendix B – Information on Interacting with People Using Assistive Devices.)
- 2.4.3 Students and staff have separate and specific procedures related to their personal use of assistive devices.
- 2.4.4 Communication with respect to the use of assistive devices:
 - a) The Board website and each school website will indicate that all Board facilities provide services that respect the independence and dignity of people with disabilities and offer services that include the use of assistive devices.

- b) Each Board facility that is open to the public will post information in the front office/reception area that welcomes the use of assistive devices and encourages users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.
- c) The Board website and school websites, as applicable, will indicate the availability of assistive devices provided by the Board* or school to assist in provision of services to people with disabilities.
- d) Each Board facility that is open to the public will, as applicable, post information in the front office/reception area that indicates the availability of assistive devices and encourage potential users to seek support from staff and volunteers as they require it.

*Note – these could include:

- **Assistive devices:** TTY service, telephones with large numbers, amplifiers, lifts.
- **Services:** Sign language interpretation, oral interpretation, real-time captioning.
- **Alternate service methods:** Assistance of a staff person to complete a transaction, e.g., school registration)

2.5 Notice of Disruption of Service

- 2.5.1 As members of the general public, people with disabilities may rely on certain facilities, services or systems in order to access the services of the school or Board offices. Escalators and elevators, for example, are important to people with mobility disabilities because that may be the only way they can access the premises. Other systems and services designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities can include accessible washrooms, amplification systems, and note-taking or TTY services. When those facilities or services are temporarily unavailable or if they are expected to be temporarily unavailable in the near future, a notice of disruption of service is required. Generally, disruptions to any of the Board's services, such as a major storm or power outage, do not require this special notice. However, if the disruption has a significant impact on people with disabilities, a notice of the disruption should be provided.
- 2.5.2 Supervisory Officers, Principals, Managers, Manager of Communications and Community Relations will ensure that the users of Board and school services are notified when there is a disruption in services that may have an impact on access to services by people with disabilities.
- 2.5.3 Notice may be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at or in the school or at or in Board facilities. Other options that may be used include: posting on the Board and/or school website; through direct communication with users of the services in accordance with school practices. (See Appendix C – Sample Notices of Disruption to Services.)
- 2.5.4 Notice must be provided in multiple formats (upon request).
- 2.5.5 If the disruption is planned, notice should be provided in advance of the disruption. If the notice is unplanned, notice should be provided as soon as possible after the disruption has been identified.
- 2.5.6 The notice of disruption of service must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

3.0 Information & Communications

3.1 Regulation

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to our services as all others we serve. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of services related to information and communications.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 Information

Includes data, facts and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital, or images, and conveys meaning.

3.2.2 Communication

Means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

3.2.3 Accessible Formats

Include, but are not limited to, options such as large print, screen readers, braille, audio format, or captioning.

3.2.4 Conversion-ready

Is an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format. **WCAG** refers to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

3.3 Responsibility

Supervisory Officers, Principals, Vice-Principals and Managers will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others providing services and programs on behalf of the Board have received initial training in the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, including the Standards related to Information and Communications.

3.4 Feedback

3.4.1 Administrators/managers will ensure that processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities.

3.4.2 Upon request, administrators/managers will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and/or communication supports to facilitate feedback.

3.4.3 Administrators/managers will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports with regard to its feedback processes.

3.5 Procurement

3.5.1 All Board employees with responsibility for purchasing will, wherever practicable, incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods and services, designing new systems or planning new initiatives that are related to provision of information and communication services.

3.6 Provision of Information and Communications in Accessible Formats

- 3.6.1 Upon request, Administrators/Managers will provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities to facilitate their access to the services of the Board.
- 3.6.2 Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs and a cost no greater than the regular cost charged to other persons.
- 3.6.3 Administrators/Managers will determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support and, in so doing, will consult with the person making the request.
- 3.6.4 Administrators/Managers will notify the public, through websites, general publications and other relevant means, about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

3.7 Accessible Websites

- 3.7.1 The Communications & Community Relations Manager will ensure that all new websites and web content on these sites will conform with WCAG 2.0 at Level A.
- 3.7.2 The Communications & Community Relations Manager will ensure that, as of January 1, 2021, all its internet websites and web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 at Level AA.
- 3.7.3 These requirements do not include Live Captions or Pre-recorded Audio Descriptions.
- 3.7.4 These requirements apply to:
 - (a) websites and web content, including web-based applications, that the Board controls directly or controls through a contractual relationship that allows for modifications of the product;
 - (b) web content published on a website after January 1, 2012
- 3.7.5 Where the Communications & Community Relations Manager determines that meeting these requirements is not practicable, such determination will include consideration of:
 - (a) the availability of commercial software or tools or both; and
 - (b) significant impact on an implementation timeline that was planned or initiated before January 1, 2012.

3.8 Educational and Training Resources and Materials

- 3.8.1 Administrators/managers will, upon notification of need, provide educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format that takes into account the accessibility needs due to a disability of the person to whom the material is to be provided.
- 3.8.2 To do so, the Accessibility Committee will procure through purchase, or obtain by other means, an accessible or conversion-ready electronic format, where available.
- 3.8.3 If the resources cannot be procured or converted into an accessible format, administrators/managers will arrange for the provision of comparable resources.
- 3.8.4 Administrators/Managers will, upon notification of need, provide information on the requirements, availability and descriptions of programs in an accessible format to persons with disabilities.
- 3.8.5 School administrators will, upon notification of need, provide student records in an accessible format to persons with disabilities.
- 3.8.6 Training materials are available in the GEDSB Staff Portal.

3.9 **Training for Program/Classroom Staff**

3.9.1 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that all staff involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction will be provided with accessibility awareness training related to these responsibilities.

3.9.2 The Accessibility Committee will keep a record of the training provided, including the dates on which training was provided and the number of individuals to whom training was provided.

3.10 **School Libraries**

3.10.1 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that school libraries are able to provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion-ready format of print resources upon request by a person with a disability.

3.10.2 The Accessibility Committee will ensure that school libraries are able to provide, procure or acquire an accessible or conversion-ready format of digital or multi-media resource materials upon request by a person with a disability (by January 1, 2020).

4.0 **EMPLOYMENT**

4.1 **Regulation**

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to employment opportunities and services as do all employees and prospective employees. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of services related to employment.

4.2 **Definitions**

4.2.1 **Performance management**

Means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness with the goal of facilitating employee success.

4.2.2 **Career development and advancement**

Includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level, or a combination of these. For both additional responsibilities and employee movement, this is usually based on merit or seniority or a combination of these.

4.2.3 **Redeployment**

Means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs as an alternative to lay-off, when a particular job or department has been eliminated where possible

4.2.4 **Information**

Includes data, facts and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

4.2.5 **Communication**

Means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

- 4.2.6 **Accessible formats**
Include, but are not limited to, options such as large print, screen readers, braille, audio format, or captioning.
 - 4.2.7 **Conversion-ready**
Is an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format.
 - 4.2.8 **WCAG** refers to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- 4.3 **Procedures**
- 4.3.1 Responsibility
 - 4.3.2 All staff who have responsibility for hiring and employee selection and/or supervise the work of employees of the Board will ensure that the provisions in this procedure are implemented.
 - 4.3.3 Human Resource Services will ensure that the provisions of this procedure are incorporated in the Board's hiring practices.
- 4.4 **Recruitment**
- 4.4.1 Human Resource Services will ensure that in its recruitment outreach practices the public is made aware that the Board will provide accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
 - 4.4.2 Applicants to the Board will be made aware that Human Resource Services provides accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
 - 4.4.3 For a job selection process, the principal/supervisor will make applicants aware that, upon request, they have access to accommodations in relation to materials and processes that will be used for applicant selection and that they will be consulted about the necessary accommodations that take into account their accessibility needs due to disability.
 - 4.4.4 When making an offer of employment, the principal/supervisor will notify the successful applicant of its policy of accommodating employees with disabilities.
- 4.5 **Supports for Employees**
- 4.5.1 Human Resource Services will inform employees of the Board's policy of supporting employees with disabilities and procedures that provide for job accommodations.
 - 4.5.2 Human Resource Services will make this information available as soon as practicable to new employees and will provide updated information as policies are revised.
- 4.6 **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**
- 4.6.1 Where an employee with a disability so requests, the principal/supervisor will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports in relation to information that is generally available to employees in the workplace and that the employee needs to perform the employee's job.
 - 4.6.2 The principal/supervisor, in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication as required in 4.1, will consult with the employee.

4.7 **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

- 4.7.1 The principal/supervisor will ensure that individualized workplace emergency response information is provided to employees who have a disability, provided the disability is such that individualized information is necessary and the principal/supervisor has been made aware of the need for accommodation due to the disability. The principal/supervisor will provide the necessary information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.
- 4.7.2 If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, the principal/supervisor will, with the consent of the employee, provide such information to the person(s) designated to provide assistance to the employee.
- 4.7.3 The principal/supervisor, in consultation with the Health and Disability Officer, will review individualized workplace emergency response information:
- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the Board;
 - b) when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
 - c) when the Board reviews its general emergency response procedures.

4.8 **Individual Accommodation Plans**

- 4.8.1 The Board will have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- 4.8.2 The Board's written process will address:
- a) how the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
 - b) the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
 - c) how the Health and Disability Officer, or designate, can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the Board's expense, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how it can be achieved.
 - d) how the employee can request to have a representative of his/her bargaining unit, or another workplace representative if the employee is not a member of a bargaining unit, participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
 - e) the steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
 - f) the frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and how this will be done.
 - g) how the reasons for denying an individual accommodation plan will be provided to an employee, if accommodation is denied.
 - h) how the Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will ensure that the individual accommodation plan is provided in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.
- 4.8.3 The Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will provide individual accommodation plans that:
- a) include, if requested, any information regarding accessible formats and accommodation supports provided;
 - b) include, if required, individualized workplace emergency response information; and
 - c) identify any other accommodation to be provided.

4.9 **Return to Work Process**

4.9.1 This return-to-work process does not replace or override any other return-to-work process created as a result of any other statutory compliance, e.g., under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, CHAPTER 16

4.9.2 The Health and Disability Officer, or designate, will develop, put in place and document a return-to-work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

4.9.3 The return-to-work process will:

- a) outline the steps to be taken to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work;
- b) use documented individual accommodation plans (as in 6.0) as part of the process; and,
- c) ensure that all staff involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction will be provided with accessibility awareness training related to these responsibilities.

4.10 **Performance Management**

In administering performance appraisal processes in respect of employees with disabilities, the principal/supervisor will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans.

4.11 **Career Development**

Where the Board provides career development and advancement to its employees, the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans will be taken into account.

4.12 **Redeployment**

Where the Board has in place a redeployment process, Human Resource Services will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans during the redeployment process.

5.0 **TRANSPORTATION**

5.1 **Regulation**

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to our services in a similar way as these services are available to all others we serve. We are committed to meeting, in a timely manner, the accessibility needs of students with disabilities in the provision of services related to student transportation.

The provision of accessible student transportation services will include the development of an individual school transportation plan for each student who has a disability that affects his/her transportation to and from school. The plan will be developed in consultation with the student's parents or guardians.

5.2 Definitions

5.2.1 Individual school transportation plan

Is defined as a plan that provides details of the arrangements that meet the transportation needs of an individual student who has a disability.

5.2.2 Operator

Means the driver of the school transportation vehicle.

5.2.3 Transportation Provider

Is defined as an entity or person who has entered into an agreement with the Board for the transportation of students in accordance with the Education Act.

5.2.4 Transportation Services

Means transportation that a Board provides for students in accordance with the Education Act.

5.3 Responsibility

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and the Manager of Transportation Services will ensure that the provisions of this Administrative Procedure are implemented.

5.4. Individual School Transportation Plans

5.4.1 The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education, or his/her designate, will, in consultation with parents or guardians, annually identify students who require specific transportation services and provide a Student Support Plan; such identification will, wherever possible, be made prior to the commencement of the school year.

5.4.2 Following consultation with parents or guardians, the Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education, or his/her designate, will work with the Manager of Transportation Services, or his/her designate, to implement recommendations within an individual student transportation plan for each student who requires specific transportation services.

5.5 Content of Individual School Transportation Plans

An individual school transportation plan shall, in respect of each student requiring specific transportation services, include the following:

5.5.1 Details of the student's assistance needs with respect to transportation to and from school.

5.5.2 Provisions for the boarding, securement and debarking of the student, as applicable.

5.6 Communication of Responsibilities re Individual School Transportation Plans

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and, where appropriate, the Manager of Transportation Services, will identify and communicate roles and responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the individual school transportation plan to the following:

a) The Transportation Provider

b) The parents or guardians of the student

c) The operator (driver) of the student transportation vehicle

d) The appropriate members of the school staff (e.g., principal, teacher, educational assistant)

e) The student

6.0 DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

6.1 Regulation

The Grand Erie District School Board is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the same opportunity of access to public spaces and play areas as do all students and members of the public. The Board is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, in the provision of design of new public spaces and play areas.

6.2 Definitions

6.2.1 Accessible Public Spaces:

Include special features that make it easier for everyone, especially people with disabilities, seniors and families to use public spaces.

6.2.2 Public Recreational Spaces:

Can also include recreational elements such as outdoor eating areas & play spaces that people of all abilities can enjoy.

6.2.3 Accessibility by Design:

Benefits everyone; good public spaces are planned and designed from the beginning with accessibility in mind and can provide people with disabilities with more opportunities to work and play independently.

6.3 Responsibility

The Superintendent of Education responsible for Special Education and the Manager of Transportation Services will ensure that the provisions of this Policy are implemented.

6.4 Public Design Standards

6.4.1 All organizations with accessibility plan requirements must make sure that their multi-year accessibility plan outlines how their requirements under the regulation (including the Design of Public Spaces Standard) will be met.

6.4.2 Designated public sector organizations are required, except where not practicable to do so, to "incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities", which may be relevant to the accessibility features of public spaces such as outdoor play spaces or outdoor public use eating areas.

6.5 Features of Accessible Public Spaces

6.5.1 Sidewalks that are free of barriers & wide enough to move around

6.5.2 Gentler ramp slopes

6.5.3 Wider accessible parking spaces for people with mobility limitations.

6.5.4 Service counters that a person seated in a mobility device can use.

Grand Erie District School Board Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

Consent Form for Student Support Persons (to be filed in the student's OSR)

I, (parent/guardian or student over the age of 18) consent to the sharing of confidential information by the staff members named below in relation to my child/ward/self, in the presence of my child/ward's/own support person named below.

- a) **Staff Members who may Share Information with the Student Support Person**
My support person consents to safeguarding the confidentiality of the information shared.

Name (print please)	Position
	School Administrator (Principal)
	Classroom Teacher

b) **Consent for Student Support Person**

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Printed Name of Student (if applicable)

c) **Support Person - Declaration of Confidentiality Agreement**

I undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of information shared between school staff and parent/guardian for whom I am a student support person:

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Support Person _____

Witness (Principal/Staff Member)

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name of
Witness _____

Grand Erie District School Board

Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual

Information on Interacting with People Using Assistive Devices

1. Assistive Devices:

Many users of Board services and facilities who have disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices. Examples of personal assistive devices include:

- wheelchairs
- scooters
- walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that “speak” when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

Key Point to Remember: One should not touch or handle an assistive device without permission.

2. Moving Personal Assistive Devices

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person’s instructions;
- confirm that the person is ready to move;
- describe what you are going to do before you do it;
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practise consideration and safety – do not leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the user’s reach.
- Respect personal space. Do not lean over a person with a disability or lean on their assistive device.
- Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

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3. How to use Canada Relay Services and TeleTYpewriter (TTY)

- a) How to communicate using the Relay Service
 1. Phone the Relay Service number (1-800-855-0511).
 2. Tell the operator the number you wish to reach.
 3. The operator will make the call for you. You speak to the operator as if you were talking directly to the person you are calling. For example, say "Hi, How are you doing?" Do not say: "Tell him I said hello."
 4. Remember to say "Go Ahead" (GA) when you finish speaking, so the person on the other end will know it is their turn to speak.
 5. If you normally speak very quickly, the operator may ask you to speak more slowly so your message can be typed while you are speaking. There will be brief silences as the operator types to the TTY user and the user replies in text.

- b) How to use a TTY (Teletypewriter)

TTY (Teletypewriter) is a device that allows users to send typed messages across phone lines. Many people who are Deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or who are deafblind may use TTYs to call other individuals.

This device generally has a keyboard and display that lets the user send and receive typed messages over telephone lines. People who are deafblind may use an additional large print or Braille display to read the typed messages.

A stand-alone TTY must communicate with another TTY. TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can call a Relay Service. The Relay Service operator will receive the messages on a TTY and relay the messages, by standard phone, to a person who does not have a TTY. A standard phone user can also place a call through the Relay Service operator to a TTY user.

If your business or organization has a TTY, learn how to operate the device.

To make a TTY call:

1. Push the "ON" switch.
2. Place the telephone receiver on the TTY's rubber receptacles. Make sure that the receiver is firmly in place and that the telephone's receiver cord is on the LEFT side of the TTY.
3. Check the telephone indicator light; if it is lit, you have the line.
4. Dial the number, and watch the telephone light; if it is flashing slowly, this indicates that the device on the other end is ringing.
5. When the person you are calling answers, you will see a phrase appear on the screen such as: "Hello, this is Richard GA." The "GA" stands for Go Ahead --
6. Don't forget to use "GA" whenever you have finished what you are saying, so that the other person will know it is his/her turn.
7. When you wish the call to end and you wish to advise the other person, type GA or SK ("Stop keying"). The person will respond by "SK" if he/she agrees. Be courteous - wait until the other person indicates "SK" before hanging up.

Note:

- The person who receives the call is always the one who starts typing first.
- Always switch the TTY "OFF" as soon as you have finished the call.

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Grand Erie District School Board
Integrated Accessibility Awareness Manual
Sample Notices of Disruption to Services

Sample 1 – Access to School Building

School Letterhead

Date: _____

To: Parents, Guardians and Community Users of our School

Maintenance work will make the main door of the school and the access ramp inaccessible from _____ (YYYY / MM / DD) to _____(YYYY | MM | DD).

A temporary ramp has been set up that gives access to the door at the following end or side area of the school building:

- East
- West
- South
- North

We regret this inconvenience. If you have questions or concerns, please contact _____ by calling _____.

Thank you,

 School Administrator Signature and Name

Sample 2 – Accessible Washroom

Date: _____

To: Visitors to the Education Centre

Our accessible washroom is out of service due to a broken water pipe. Repairs are underway and the washroom is expected to be usable again by tomorrow. In the interim, we have made arrangements for our visitors to use the accessible washroom at [123 Main Street], which is located [next door to our premises]. We apologize for this inconvenience.

Thank you,

Name: _____, Division Manager of Facility Services – Maintenance

Grand Erie District School Board

GEPIC Meetings 2020-21

GEPIC Meeting 8:30 PM	NSSC - Dogwood	Thu 22/10/2020 6:30 PM	Thu 22/10/2020
GEPIC Meeting 8:30 PM	NSSC - Dogwood	Thu 14/01/2021 6:30 PM	Thu 14/01/2021
GEPIC Meeting 8:30 PM	NSSC - Dogwood	Thu 11/03/2021 6:30 PM	Thu 11/03/2021
GEPIC Meeting 8:30 PM	NSSC - Dogwood	Thu 13/05/2021 6:30 PM	Thu 13/05/2021



GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

RE: **Learner Intervention Tracking for Excellence (LITE)**

DATE: September 17, 2020

Background

Grand Erie partners with Cardinal Software Systems Inc. to implement the Learner Intervention Tracking for Excellence (LITE) electronic software system. The LITE platform is used in many areas in special education and is also used by the student success department.

LITE allows system support staff to process paperwork for consent forms, assessments, Identification, Placement and Review Committee paperwork, and Supervised Alternative Learning paperwork. Data can be extracted from the LITE platform at the school or the system level depending on purpose or need.

Additional Information

Below is an overview of data collected in various LITE modules currently being used in Grand Erie. In previous years, data for the first six months of the current year was shared. This year the report includes full year data only.

Individual Education Plan Writer (IEP Writer)

Individual Education Plans are created in LITE. Alternate Report Cards and Transition Plans are also part of the IEP Writer module.

- 2014-15 → 5,079 active IEPs
- 2015-16 → 5,192 active IEPs
- 2016-17 → 5,257 active IEPs
- 2017-18 → 5,284 active IEPs
- 2018-19 → 5,078 active IEPs
- 2019-20 → 4,752 active IEPs

Year Total IEPs	Total IEPs	Identified	Non-Identified
2014-15	5,079	2,269	2,810
2015-16	5,192	2,253	2,939
2016-17	5,257	2,167	3,090
2017-18	5,284	2,326	2,958
2018-19	5,078	2,141	2,937
2019-20	4,752	1,992	2,760

Interventions - Professional Support Services Personnel (PSSP) Referral Data

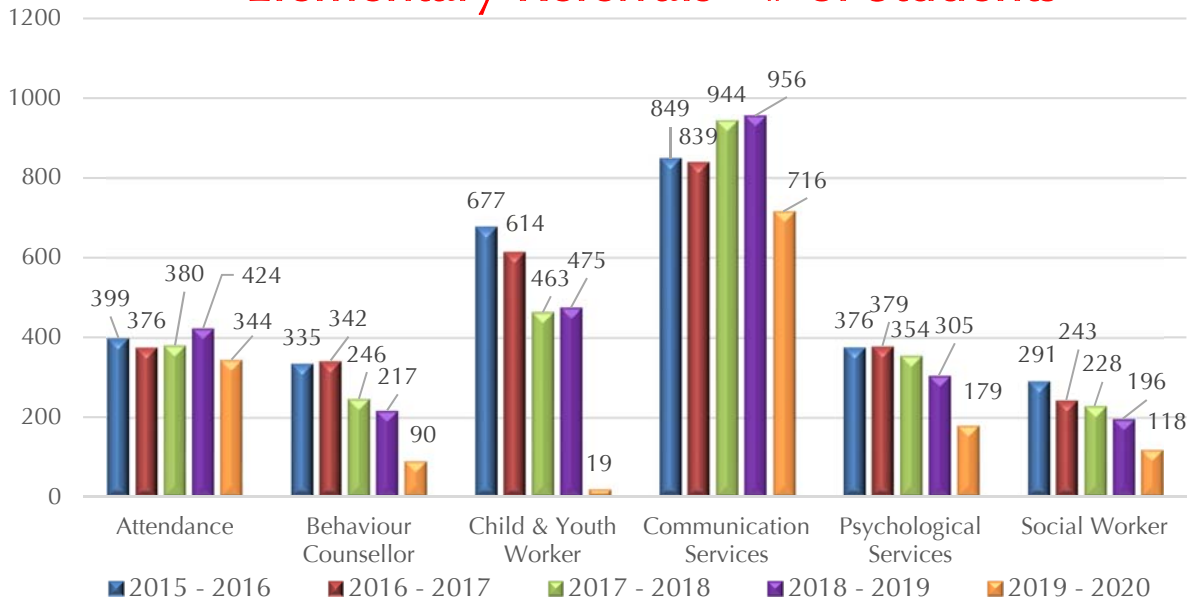
Total Number of Referrals and Total Number of Students by Discipline

2015-16						
Attendance	Behaviour Counsellor	Child & Youth Worker	Communication Services	Psychological Services	Social Worker	Total
# of Referrals						
1817	386	881	876	441	587	4988
# of Students						
1174	379	868	860	424	580	4285
2016-17						
Attendance	Behaviour Counsellor	Child & Youth Worker	Communication Services	Psychological Services	Social Worker	Total
# of Referrals						
1948	371	836	862	444	545	5006
# of Students						
1225	367	823	861	431	538	4245
2017-18						
Attendance	Behaviour Counsellor	Child & Youth Worker	Communication Services	Psychological Services	Social Worker	Total
# of Referrals						
2050	272	678	959	397	512	4869
# of Students						
1297	263	669	959	386	510	4086
2018-19						
Attendance	Behaviour Counsellor	Child & Youth Worker	Communication Services	Psychological Services	Social Worker	Total
# of Referrals						
2166	247	693	994	351	568	5019
# of Students						
1412	237	683	984	347	533	4196
2019-20						
Attendance	Behaviour Counsellor	Child & Youth Worker	Communication Services	Psychological Services	Social Worker	Total
# of Referrals						
1692	109	24	726	208	296	3055
# of Students						
1199	105	24	725	206	279	2538

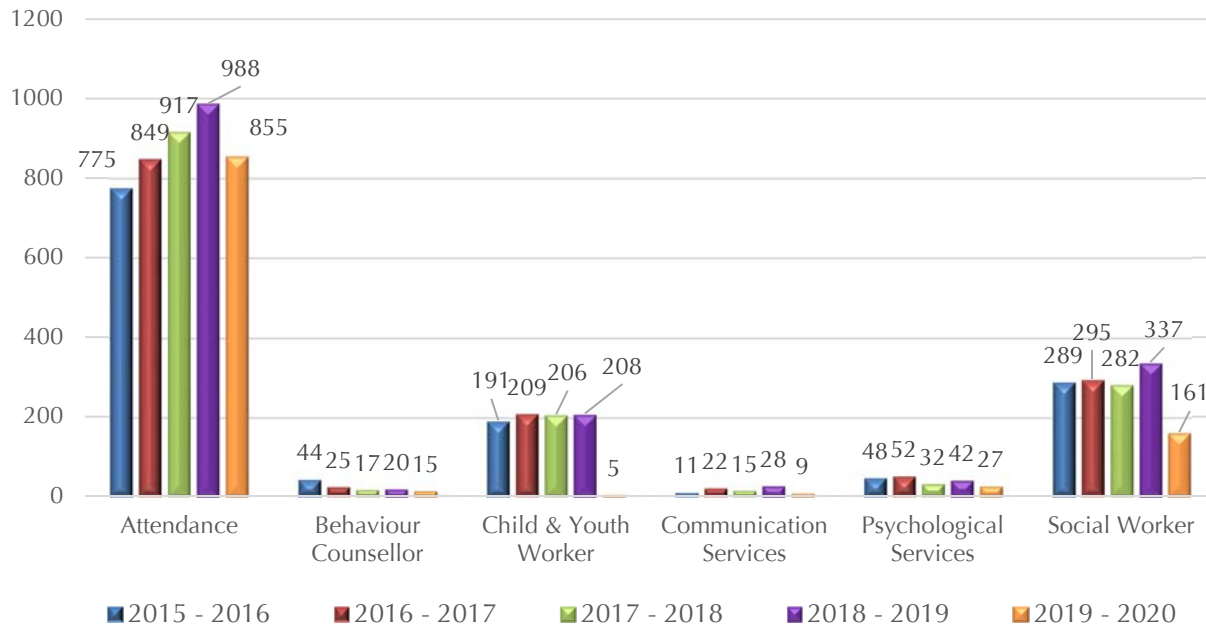
There were 323 Individual Class Referrals to CYWs for Social/Emotional Learning Workshops.

Total Number of Referrals for Elementary and Secondary Schools

Elementary Referrals - # of Students



Secondary Referrals - # of Students



Cumulative student profiles

- 2016-17 3972 student profiles
- 2017-18 5507 student profiles
- 2018-19 3571 student profiles
- 2019-20 3996 student profiles

Meeting Management (MMM Module)

- 2014-15 → 2,275 IPRCs
- 2015-16 → 2,255 IPRCs
- 2016-17 → 2,189 IPRCs
- 2017-18 → 2,222 IPRCs
- 2018-19 → 2141 IPRCs
- 2019-20 → 1,992 IPRCs

The number of IPRC meetings includes both school-based and area or system level IPRC meetings and Waivers.

Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL Module)

- 319 SAL Plans were submitted in 2016-17
- 117 SAL Plans were submitted in 2017-18
- 115 SAL Plans were submitted in 2018-19
- 95 SAL Plans were submitted in 2019-20

The Medical Plan Module replaced the Student Support and Transportation Plans in September 2019.

- 2019-20 1329 Medical and Personal Care Plans were created

Special Education Classrooms 2020-21

Elementary Self-Contained Classrooms		Secondary Self-Contained Classrooms	
Type of Class	Number	Type of Class	Number
Multi-Handicap	2	Multi-Handicap	3
Strategies (Behaviour)	4	Autism	4
Gifted	2	Life Skills	11
Autism	11	Vocational Skills	9
Life Skills	7	Bridge	10
Transitions	5		

Special Education Referrals

Special Education referrals are submitted to access support from system teaching staff and Lead Educational Assistants. Referrals can be for individual student support or classroom-based support.

- 2017 – 2018 1084 referrals
- 2018 – 2019 1082 referrals
- 2019 – 2020 625 referrals

Behaviour/Safety Plan

A Be/Safe Plan is an individualized plan that is implemented by staff in situations where prevention and intervention strategies are required. A Behaviour Plan can include a Safety Plan for crisis-response when current strategies have been unsuccessful in preventing behaviours that present an immediate risk of injury to staff and/or students. The Safety Plan details specific actions for staff to minimize or prevent injury.

- 2018-19 618 Behaviour/Safety Plans were created
- 2029-20 748 Behaviour/Safety Plans were created



GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

TO: JoAnna Roberto, Director of Education & Secretary
FROM: Liana Thompson, Superintendent of Education
RE: **Public Consultation Plan for Special Education Plan Annual Review**
DATE: October 5, 2020

<p>Recommended Action: Moved by _____ Seconded by _____ THAT the Grand Erie District School Board receive the report Public Consultation Plan for Special Education Plan Annual Review as information.</p>

Background:

Regulation 306 Special Education Programs and Services requires that all school boards create a plan that outlines the methods by which the needs of exceptional pupils will be met and that the special education plan is amended to meet the current needs of special education pupils of the board. School boards must ensure that the special education plan is reviewed annually and consultation with the public must occur.

Consultation questions are available on Grand Erie website and the public is prompted to respond to the survey when accessing Grand Erie's Special Education Plan on the website.

Input provided by the public is shared at a spring SEAC meeting annually and summarized in the Special Education Plan.

Recommended Next Steps:

Continue with this consultation process in the 2020-21 school year.

Grand Erie Multi-Year Plan

This report supports the Community indicator of Success for Every Student and the following statement: we will facilitate opportunities for and encourage families to be involved in our schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Liana Thompson
Superintendent of Education

SEAC Meetings 2020-21 – Virtual vs. Face-to-Face

The Brant Medical Officer of Health was contacted and provided the following guidance:

- Up to 50 people in the Board room as long as all are masked, and physical distancing occurs. If physical distancing of 2 meters cannot be met, then masks and eye protection are required.
- A COVID-19 self-assessment is successfully completed:
 - <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Board room is cleaned before and after the meeting

Understanding that all may not be comfortable or able to return to in person SEAC meetings, MS Teams will continue to be used for virtual participation.

Two options are available:

- **Option 1: Return to Board Room -All members wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** (masks and eye protection or face shield)
- **Option 2: Return to Board Room with 2 m physical distance observed requiring no PPE –** only 14 members in attendance others member participate remotely
- **Options 3: Virtual Meetings**

The following will need to occur for the first two options:

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Must be worn when entering and exiting the meeting
- Physical Distancing is required in order to remove PPE (mask),

2. Audience – Public Attendance

- Will not be allowed at this time
- Meeting will be streamed via YouTube Live until the COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols have been completely lifted

3. Responsibility

- Members attending in person, will be required to follow the Protocol for Access to Admin Buildings (*to be provided*)
- Complete self-assessment prior to entering building <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Due to Health and Safety Protocols, paper copies of the SEAC package will not be distributed. Members bringing their own copies are responsible for removing/shredding following the meeting.

The following will need to occur for all three options:

4. Technology

- In order to ensure good audio for those participating remotely and for streaming via YouTube Live for public viewing, each attendee will need to connect to MS Team via their devices.
- In the Board Room, each member will require a personal headset with mic – this will allow for multiple user participation via MS Teams in the Board Room while reducing feedback and improving sound quality for those listening remotely. From a remote location, headsets and mics are optional.
- Members in attendance, have the option to use video and/or audio throughout the SEAC meeting

The Board room can accommodate max of 14 people with 2m physical distancing. 10 around the table and 4 at back of room

We currently have 11 Community Representatives, 2 Trustees as members of SEAC and 7 Resource Staff, for a total of 20 people.

If we are all in attendance, we will be required to wear masks and face shields during the meeting.





PROCEDURE

FT105

Playground Equipment

Board Received: June 20 2016 Review Date: September 2020

Accountability

1. Frequency of Reports – As needed
2. Criteria for Success – All construction and repairs comply with CAN/CSA standards.
 - All construction, repair and replacement materials are assessed for durability and lifespan
 - All installed materials are assessed for short and long-term maintenance
 - Supervision is addressed.

Procedures

1. Donated Playground Funds and Donated Playground Equipment – Overview

- a) Grand Erie District School Board encourages community/parent groups to purchase and install new play structures on Board property. The Board does not contribute financially but assumes the liability and responsibility for the play structure. School generated funds may be used to support new play structure projects.
- b) The Board assumes the liability for the playground equipment and is responsible for regular inspections and the co-ordination of repairs and maintenance. The board is financially responsible for inspections; however, all repairs and maintenance are the financial responsibility of the school not the Board.
- c) For all additions to playground equipment (new and additions to existing structures), the school must initially retain 10% of the total project cost in a “Repair Fund”. This total fund per school – must never drop below the lesser of 10% or \$1,000.
- d) Purchasing Services will not issue a purchase order for the playground equipment project until the school transfers the full project costs, including the repair fund (10% of total project costs) to Business Services.
- e) If a School is unable to provide funding for necessary repairs, the equipment may be taken out of service or removed from the school.
- f) Tax receipts are available for any eligible donations in accordance with Grand Erie District School Board Procedure F106 Receipts of Charitable Donations.

2. Design/Planning Stage

- a) Principals must consult with the Supervisor of Purchasing Services as well as the Manager of Facility Services or designate to share the school’s plans for the purchase of new playground equipment and all additions to existing playground equipment during the initial planning stage.
- b) The design, construction and installation of all (new and existing) playground equipment must conform to the standards from the Canadian Standards Association CSA-Z614, Children's Playspaces and Equipment currently in effect at the time of installation as well as current AODA compliance requirements. As such, a third party qualified and/or certified in CCPI (Canadian Certified Playground Inspector) who is independent of the playground equipment manufacturer is required to work with school committees during design and installation and would co-ordinate site specific concerns with appropriate Board staff.

- c) The Board's Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy must be included in the planning and installation process to review and approve CSA compliance, identify potential maintenance issues and approve the site location chosen for the equipment prior to contacting or committing to any supplier.
- d) Although the Board accepts design standards of reputable manufacturers, it has restricted certain design aspects:
 - wood components (including curbing), may be approved in construction with prior written approval from the Manager of Facilities Services. Ground cover, in the form of engineered wood fibre, is acceptable;
 - platform height not to exceed six (6) feet; and
 - protective landing surfaces must be compliant with CSA Z614-07 Playground Standards and manufacturer must provide proof their product meets or exceeds the energy absorbency requirements for defined fall heights and Head Injury Criteria (HIC) as stated therein. Sand or wood/bark mulch products not meeting acceptable engineered standards will not be permitted.
- e) The Board reserves the right to restrict other design aspects and protective landing surfaces as deemed appropriate.

3. Vendor Selection:

- a) The purchase of playground equipment must be compliant with the Board's Purchasing Policy F6 and Procedure F107, which must be initiated before committing to any supplier.
- b) Donations of playground equipment by approved playground manufacturers are exempt from Purchasing Services Competitive Bid Guidelines.
- c) All manufacturers installing playground equipment on Board property must provide proof of vehicle and liability insurance coverage for a minimum of two million dollars with the Board named as additional insured. The manufacturer must also provide a certificate of good standing from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board before work is awarded. Purchasing Services will not issue a purchase order for installation until these documents have been reviewed by the Supervisor of Purchasing Services.
- d) Installation of playground equipment by volunteers is not permitted.

4. Installation

- a) All manufacturers, or their certified sub-contractor, installing playground equipment will be responsible to determine the location of underground utility services and provide a copy of the utility service inspection report to Facility Services prior to start of installation.
- b) On completion, the manufacturer is to provide the Principal with a letter indicating:
 - i) equipment and installation conforms to the current CAN/CSA guidelines and standards; and
 - ii) the terms and conditions of the guarantee and warranty.
- c) These documents must be reviewed by the Principal and forwarded to the Facility Services Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy.
- d) All play structures and equipment must be installed by an approved manufacturer or its approved subcontractor.

5. Existing Equipment

- a) All renovations and upgrades will comply with the current CAN/CSA guidelines and standards for playground equipment.
- b) Additions to existing playground equipment must be approved by the Facility Services Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy prior to any in depth planning.

6. Inspections

- a) **Daily Visual Inspections:** A visual inspection shall be performed on all playground equipment used by students by the Principal or designate at least once on each school day. This inspection is intended to identify obvious safety concerns and needed repairs, such as glass, broken boards, loose or missing handrails or anything that could cause injury to a student. When a deficiency is identified in the daily inspection, the Principal shall follow the steps set out in 4(a) of this procedure. A daily maintenance logbook must be kept on file at the school.
- b) **Monthly Inspections:** Monthly inspections of the playground equipment shall be done by one of the School Principal, School Custodian or Facility Services Supervisory staff. The monthly inspection checklists must be retained at the school.
- c) **Recorded Annual Inspection:** A detailed annual inspection of playground equipment located on Board property shall be performed by a certified inspector (see 2(b) above) appointed by the board. The inspection findings and actions shall be recorded and kept on file in the Facility Services area for at least three (3) years from the date of inspection. Where possible, the certified inspector shall make repairs at the time of the inspection.
- d) **Inspection Checklists:** The monthly and annual inspections will use the checklists provided by either the manufacturer or the Canadian Standards Association. (see attached Daily Playground Inspection Checklist – Appendix A and Monthly Playground Inspection Checklist - Appendix B)

7. Maintenance and Repairs

- a) When a school staff person on yard duty or the daily inspection of the equipment identifies a safety concern or an item in need of repair, it shall be reported to the school Principal immediately. The school Principal shall report the concern to the Facility Services Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy immediately. When a defect is reported it shall be repaired as soon as possible and, in the interim, the Principal shall make the equipment out of bounds to students.
- b) The Work Order for repairs completed by the maintenance staff, contractor or equipment vendor will be the record of repair.
- c) Should a repair that involves a safety hazard take more than one day to complete, the children shall be prevented from using the equipment through the use of a snow fence and a “Keep Off” warning sign.
- d) When the cost to repair a piece of playground equipment is excessive, the Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy, after consulting with the school Principal may decide that the equipment should be taken out of service and removed from the school grounds. The school Principal will inform the community/parent group of any decisions to remove equipment purchased by community funds. Alternatively, the principal in consultation with the school council may elect to raise funds to complete the required repairs.

8. Equipment on Local Recreation Authority Property

- a) In many cases, playground equipment that is used by the students of a school is located on non-Board property adjacent to the school property. In these cases the daily inspections procedures shall be carried out by the Principal or designate as detailed in 6(a) and the Principal shall follow the same procedures for reporting a concern to Division Manager, Maintenance and Energy as detailed in 7(a). The Principal shall make the equipment out of bounds to students until the equipment is repaired.
- b) Maintenance Supervisor shall advise the local Recreation authority of the need to repair playground equipment located on Recreation property and shall monitor the progress of repairs and advise the School Principal when the repairs are completed.

9. **General**

- a) Each school will conduct Playground Safety sessions outlining the playground rules applicable to the specific location. These sessions should be held for students, teachers, noon hour supervisors and any volunteer yard supervisors at the beginning of each school year and will include warnings about restricted use during inclement weather.

Le 10 juin 2020

L'honorable Stephen Lecce
Ministère de l'Éducation
Édifice Mowat, 900, rue Bay
Toronto (ON) M7A 1L2

L'honorable Stephen Lecce

Objet : Le Comité consultatif ministériel de l'enfance en difficulté (CCMEED)

Au nom du comité consultatif de l'enfance en difficulté du CSC Nouvelon je soutiens les préoccupations présentées par le Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (NPSCDSB), le Durham District School Board (DDSB) et le Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) au sujet de l'état actuel du comité consultatif ministériel de l'enfance en difficulté. Nous appuyons les déclarations de ces conseils qu'avec une augmentation d'élèves ayant besoin des services d'enfance en difficulté le rôle du CCMEED devient plus important afin de fournir de l'information et de l'appui aux conseils scolaires et aux comités consultatifs de l'enfance en difficulté (CCED).

Nous sommes d'accord avec les recommandations du NPSCDSB, le DDSB et le GECDSB que chacune des six régions du Ministère d'éducation soit représentée par un membre d'un CCED de la région. Le CCMEED deviendrait réellement représentatif de toutes les régions géographiques de la province de l'Ontario.

Nous reconnaissons que la composition actuelle du CCMEED ayant une représentation des diverses anomalies est nécessaire, puisque ces membres offrent une gamme de connaissances et d'expériences au CCMEED. Afin d'augmenter le rendement du CCMEED, nous appuyons la demande que les rencontres de ce comité se déroulent d'une façon virtuelle. Ceci permettrait aux gens qui sont dans l'impossibilité de se déplacer de participer au CCMEED, surtout les gens du nord.

Nous vous demandons respectueusement de prendre note de nos suggestions afin de combler les postes vacants du CCMEED d'une façon collaborative et équitable.

Je vous prie d'agréer l'expression de mes sentiments distingués.



André Crépeau, Président du CCED

cc CCED des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario
Paul Henry, Directeur de l'éducation et secrétaire-trésorier
Jamie West, Député de Sudbury
France Gélinas, Député de Nickel Belt

Translation of the letter from Conseil scolaire catholique Nouvelon dated June 10 2020 as presented on the previous page: ^{I-1 (b)}

On behalf of the CSC Nouvelon Special Education Advisory Committee, I support the concerns presented by the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (NPSCDSB), the Durham District School Board (DDSB) and the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) regarding the current status of the Minister's Special Education Advisory Committee. We support the statements of these boards that with an increase in students needing special education services the role of the CCMEED is becoming more important in providing information and support to school boards and advisory committees special education (CCED).

We agree with the recommendations of the NPSDCSB, the DDSB and the GECDSB that each of the six regions of the Ministry of Education be represented by a member of a CCED in the region. The CCMEED would become truly representative of all geographic regions in the province of Ontario.

We recognize that the current membership of the CCMEED with representation of the various anomalies is necessary, as these members offer a range of knowledge and experience to the CCMEED. In order to increase the performance of the CCMEED, we support the request that the meetings of this committee take place virtually. This would allow people who are unable to travel to participate in CCMEED, especially people from the north.

We respectfully request that you take note of our suggestions in order to fill vacant CCMEED positions in a collaborative and equitable manner.

Please accept the expression of my distinguished feelings.



Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

Lucille Kyle, Chair of the Board
Sean Monteith, Director of Education

RECEIVED
JUN 29 2020

February 14, 2020

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
438 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2A5

Dear Minister Lecce:

As representatives of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB), we are writing to express our support to concerns expressed in letters from Durham District School Board (dated June 3, 2019), Greater Essex County District School Board (dated July 5, 2019) and Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board (dated December 11, 2019) SEACs. Our group feels strongly that the concerns expressed in each of these letters will pose serious risks for our students, especially those with special needs and students who attend schools in rural areas and/or with declining enrolments.

Administrators in our district's smaller secondary schools have reported to us for many years that building timetables to meet the needs of all students, in all pathways, can be very challenging once they are faced with declining pupil populations. The proposed increases to average class sizes by our presiding government will decrease the availability of compulsory courses, and more specifically electives courses, that many of our students require or are interested in, to further their interests and help them gain employment advantages. As stated in previous letters submitted to you by other concerned districts, "An increase in average class size will only exacerbate the issue in smaller schools that are already challenged with decreased course selection." Reducing the number of caring adults in the lives of our youth stands to detract from our focus on creating successful outcomes for our future community leaders.

Further to increased class sizes, the introduction of mandatory online courses would not meet the needs of individuals with learning disabilities, developmental disabilities and other learning differences who require additional support from their educators. We agree with other school boards that the online format is simply not suitable for everyone and making them compulsory does not recognize the individual needs of students.

We urge the Ministry of Education to review its position and revise the plan for education based on the recommendations of relevant stakeholders, including parents and community experts. We also hope that the Ministry will investigate and implement the suggestions outlined by the Durham District School Board, specifically:

1. Provide e-learning opportunities to students across the Province as an option, but not make it mandatory for all students.
2. Encourage professional learning for staff, and e-learning exposure for students in Learning Strategies courses to allow for specific opportunities to explore the D2L platform and gain direct experiences with digital learning with the support of their special education teachers. This will allow students to self-assess their confidence and suitability to this learning delivery method.



Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

Possibilities
TODAY & TOMORROW

Lucille Kyle, Chair of the Board
Sean Monteith, Director of Education

3. Allow students access to all pathways (community living, workplace, college, university) online, should they wish, including during alternative school times, to encourage students to explore other opportunities (e.g., summer courses).
4. Slow down changes to class size and establish clear guidelines to measure and monitor the impact on students, particularly those with special needs.
5. Provide further transparency about students' pathways and monitor how changes are impacting pathways, including students earning a Certificate of Achievement and Certificate of Accomplishment.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Allan

Kelly Allan,
SEAC Chair

Lisa Anne Chatten

Lisa Anne Chatten,
SEAC Vice-chair

c.c. Lucille Kyle, Chair of the Board
Ken Dostaler, Superintendent of Education – Student Services
Todd Smith, MPP Bay of Quinte
Daryl Kramp, MPP Hastings-Lennox & Addington
Chairs of Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees

File