



# Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

## MINUTES

### SEAC Members

**Present:** Chair T. Waldschmidt, L. Boswell, P. Boutis, C. Brady, T. Buchanan, B. Caers-Bruce, R. Collver, L. DeJong, A. Detmar, M. Gatopoulos, K. Jones, N. Schuur, L. Scott, CA Sloat, J. Trovato,

**Regrets:** M. Carpenter, W. Rose, T. Wilson, R. Winter.

### Resource Staff

**Present:** P. Bagchee, L. Boudreault, K. Mertins, S. Slaman, L. Thompson, J. White.

**Recorder:** P. Curran.

**Guests:** J. Gemmill, ITS Staff, J. Roberto, Director of Education.

**A-1 Opening** **T. Waldschmidt**

(a) Welcome T. Waldschmidt

Chair Waldschmidt welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and welcomed new members Amanda Detmar representing Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services and community representative Mike Gatopoulos.

(b) Chair Waldschmidt read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

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

i. Add C-1 (d) Native Representative to SEAC Update – L. Thompson

ii. Add C-1 (e) Updating SEAC Information and Meetings on the Board's website – L. Thompson

iii. Add C-1 (f) Improving Community Communications – L. Thompson

Moved by: K. Jones

Seconded by: P. Boutis

“THAT the SEAC 20-02 Agenda for October 15, 2020 Meeting be approved as amended.”

**CARRIED**



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

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

(a) Greetings Director J. Roberto  
Director Roberto thanked members for allowing her to attend the virtual meeting and to share the items SEAC is currently working on.

(b) Rick Hansen Foundation – School Partnership Initiative K. Mertins

Grand Erie DSB partnered with RHF which provides access to teaching resources for Kindergarten to G12 students in both official languages.

The material helps teachers promote access and inclusion and partnership includes an ambassador program which provides a class speaker to help facilitate student understanding.

Materials are available at no cost to the public and the RHF revised lessons into Little Big Lessons to help parents who are teaching at home. <https://www.rickhansen.com/little-big-lessons>

Use of the website and materials was lower than anticipated which was attributed to the labour disruptions and the onset of the pandemic. An increase in use occurred during the school shutdown.

The Board will continue to promote the RHF resources as well as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3, 2020.

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

(a) Ratification of Minutes September 17, 2020 Meeting T. Waldschmidt

Moved by: P Boutis  
Seconded by: L. Boswell

THAT the Minutes of SEAC 20-01 held September 17, 2020 be approved as distributed.

**CARRIED**

(b) Grand Erie's Roadmap L. Thompson

Members reviewed the revised document and would like to see it included on the website as it is more comprehensive than the Parents' Guide to Special Education but more reader friendly than some of the standards.

Suggestions for further revisions included:

Page 1  
DID YOU KNOW?  
Where to Find Help and Support



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

- Change Ontario Early Years Centre to EarlyON Child and Family Centres

### Top Ten Advocacy Tips

# 6 – Remain professional, focused and positive.

- Often people are stressed and may feel badly if unable to remain professional, focused and positive. – this tip will be deleted.

#8 – Be prepared before meetings.

- Changing to “do your best to be prepared before meetings”

### Page 2

#3 - IPRC Attendees

- Must have minimum of three attendees locally and three for area IPRC

### Page 3

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

#3. Your child may have an IEP created based on their strengths and needs without formal identification through the IPRC process.

Amend to: *The Ontario Human Rights Code permits your child to receive an IEP created based on their strengths and needs without formal identification through the IPRC process.*

### Page 4

Preventing Conflict through the Cultivation of a Positive School Climate

- Concise information is helpful and easy to read but suggested including a link to the one page in Standard 10.

### Distribution

Through GEPIC electronically or through annual meeting

Consider requesting school administrators share it with School Councils.

- (c) Update – Special Education and the Virtual Learning Academy (VLA)

J. White

Students with Special Education needs in Self Contained classes continue to be supported virtually by their self-contained classroom teacher through synchronous and/or asynchronous learning.

Students who have chosen to learn virtually and who have Special Education needs are supported by the virtual academy teacher. They continue to be connected to the home school for resource supports with a current focus on LRT’s supporting VLA teachers to update IEP’s and to ensure they understand student strengths and needs as it relates to the supports they may require from the VLA teacher.

One way to provide students with support is through the web-based licenses. Grand Erie DSB continues to provide Lexia licenses for students with reading needs. This year we are also offering licenses for students



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

on alternative curriculum with a program called TeachTown. TeachTown Basics assists teachers in programming for functional academics and Transition to Adulthood modules which cover daily living skills like banking, shopping, cleaning, etc.

VLA students with assigned SEA technology devices are able to use their devices at home. Training and support are provided virtually by LEARNStyle and our Lead EA for SEA. Our SEA Teacher Technician supports VLA teachers with ways to use assistive devices and software to support students.

Consideration for sending other SEA devices home is based on parent request and given on a case-by-case basis according to curriculum needs, safety, and the requirement for professional supervision. Other types of devices that have been sent home are walkers and FM equipment for hearing.

We are continuing with our model of tiered intervention with the first tier of support coming from the school LRT. VLA teachers will be guided to reach out to home school LRT's when students are presenting with challenges in the VLA as a first step for problem solving. Some examples of LRT support to VLA classroom teachers would be implementing IEP's, coordinating Lexia<sup>®</sup> and TeachTown supports for students, co-planning modified or alternative programming. Access to system staff and supports as needed/required would also occur through the home school in school or resource team meeting processes

Recently we began working through a needs assessment in the VLA for EA support. EA's continue to remain allocated to the home school, but in some situations may be providing shared support to students in the VLA. Currently the focus has been on pervasive needs in the area of alternative programming, nonverbal/minimally verbal communication, or other unique supports such as ASL. EA support may include individual synchronous meetings, preparing of tangible materials or activities for use at home based on direction coming from the VLA teacher for this support.

Some students in the VLA require an educational assessment using the Academic Achievement Battery. If the Resource Team concludes that this is necessary, arrangements can be made with the parent for the student to go to an isolated room in the home school for an assessment with the LRT.

The delivery of Psychological and Speech-Language Services has resumed with face to face work being organized in the home school and those services that can be delivered virtually being done so over a Microsoft Teams platform.

Staff continue to develop resources in our Professional Learning Environment specific to new areas of Professional Development that VLA



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

teachers may require, e.g., accommodations to consider in VLA /other resources for VLA teachers on IEP's

<http://web.teachtown.com/>

- (d) Native Representative to SEAC Update L. Thompson

The Superintendent responsible for Indigenous Education confirmed she will make a request for interested persons to sit on SEAC at her next meeting.

B Caers-Bruce indicated her teaching partner who is interested in SEAC. She will ask her to contact the Recording Secretary directly.

- (e) Updating SEAC Information and Meetings on the Board's Website L. Thompson

Public meetings are noted on the facing page of the website under the Grand Erie Event Calendar. The live link for YouTube meetings is placed there just prior to the meeting and is available by clicking the meeting information.

Consider placing a link next to the meeting date in the SEAC schedule section.

Agenda packages will be sent to the Board's communication team for posting on the Friday prior to the meeting.

SEAC minutes will be posted once approved by the Board.

- (f) Improving Community Communications L. Thompson

OReg 464/97, <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/970464>  
the governing document for SEAC has no requirement for community outreach.

One member commented her previous experience in a larger board provided more connection and networking opportunities with families. She is hopeful this can be achieved in Grand Erie as the geographic spread lends a feeling of isolation.

She also mentioned this board had an annual Special Education Fair and questioned if a night to discuss IEP or IPRC may be a way to engage parents.

Members were reminded to be mindful of additional tasks for staff at this time and to be aware of privacy concerns.

Agency representatives work hard at linking information and many have parent groups that meet regularly.



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

Grand Erie DSB also provides an opportunity for parent feedback, through the link on our Special Education Plan.

Lansdowne CC, Woodview MH & A Services and Contact Brant all have parent groups where special education information may be shared.

Important to keep parents on topic at general meetings and not share personal information especially that which breaches privacy boundaries.

Members noted other parent groups that have dwindled over the years and the annual public meetings that had more staff than parent participants.

Other suggestions were to flag what parents are looking at on our website to know where most concerns lie and to promote information through GEPIC and school councils in September.

One member suggested considering a virtual chat with the community in the spring moderated by any interested SEAC members.

### **D-1 New Business**

**T. Waldschmidt**

#### **(a) Annual Update – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-22**

**K. Mertins**

The framework for our plan comes from the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Section 9 outlines the amendments made this school year, noting that work on this was interrupted by the pandemic.

Further to the partnership with the Rick Hansen Foundation, this information was included in the MYAP.

Also, the Grand Erie website has met the criteria for public organizations, and revision of the parent portal is beginning.

Ed Tech and Student Success staff worked with teachers to help them learn how to use Bright Space for all learners <https://www.d2l.com/k-12/>

The update also lists changes to remove barriers and increase accessibility in various buildings across the board including physical upgrades and the addition of Braille signage.

New signage will be placed in buildings inviting members of public to share accommodation needs with staff.

As time and finances permit, Facility Services will hire an Accessibility Consultant to review some of the buildings in our board.



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

A reminder of the December 3, 2020 International Day of Persons with Disabilities was provided.

- (b) Standard 14 – Equipment L. Boudreault / S. Slaman

The purpose of this document in the Special Education Plan is to inform parents of equipment and how it is funded by the board and ministry.

Assistive technology is a per pupil finite amount. Requests are approved through a SEA Committee; this year a virtual interview will be included in the documentation required for AT.

Claims based funding is in place for auditory, physical and other equipment, but not AT. A professional assessment is required.

Regular stock of Personal Protective Equipment is provided to staff, following the procedures for purchasing, assigning, replacing, disposing and storage. If a significant amount of PPE equipment is required it could be submitted for payment through SEA though they usually just order equipment as needed.

- E-1 Other Business T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None

- F-1 Standing Items T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None

- G-1 Information Items T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) None.

- H-1 Community Updates T. Waldschmidt**

- i. National Disability Month – October

T. Buchanan advised members of this event and noted Community Living Brant has partnered with Supported Employment.

On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Paris Dam will be lit up with CLB colours and public are encouraged to wear dark blue or purple in support.



## Special Education Advisory Committee SEAC 20-02

Virtual MS Teams

Thursday, October 15, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

---

**I-1 Correspondence T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) LDAO SEAC Circular – October  
L. Boswell noted the reference to October slated as Learning Disabilities Awareness Month which is not listed on our website. Superintendent Thompson will follow up by promoting it on social media.
- (b) Ltr – AMDSB – After School Skills Development Program Feb 18, 2019 (sic)  
No discussion

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

- (a) Smart Goals in Reference to IEP Planning – P Boutis
- (b) Grade 3 CCAT Results – CA Sloat

**K-1 Next Meeting T. Waldschmidt**

- (a) Thursday, November 19, 2020 | MS Teams | 6:00 p.m.

**L-1 Adjournment T. Waldschmidt**

Moved by: T. Buchanan  
Seconded By: L. Boswell

“THAT the SEAC 20-02 meeting of October 15, 2020 meeting be adjourned at 7:31p.m.”

**CARRIED**