



**Minutes of the Special Education  
Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2016  
4:00 pm – Maitland Room  
Avon Maitland Education Centre**

**Voting Members/**

**Alternates Present:** K. Fox, D. Barkley, L. Harper, J. Costello, T. McGregor, D. Pratley, C. Bennewies, L. Geddes, T. Sparling.

**Non-Voting Members:** E. Bannerman

**Staff Present:** P. Blair

**Member Regrets:** G. Haber, M. Krebs

**Guests Present:** H. Finch.

**Recorder:** C. Trotter

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**1.0 Routine Matters**

**1.1 Approval of the Agenda**

Motion to approve the February 3, 2016 agenda: L. Geddes seconded by C. Bennewies.

**CARRIED**

**1.2 Approval of the January 6, 2016 SEAC Minutes**

Motion to accept the minutes D. Barkley seconded by L. Harper.

**CARRIED**

**2.0 Business Arising from the Minutes**

**2.1** Regarding a previous question about the automated calling system from Stratford Northwestern S. S., which informs parents the 30 day Individual Education Plan (IEP) consultation is underway. If there are any comments, questions, parents should know that they can ask questions of the Resource Teachers at the school.

Superintendent Blair noted that the AMDSB sponsored students to attend the ReAction 4 Inclusion Conference.

Trevor McGregor also asked that when this event is happening, to let Community Living Associations know. They may be able to tap into additional funding. One of the students from Northwestern SS has contacted Trevor. They will chat about follow up.

## **3.0 New Business**

### **3.1 Partners in Employment – Trevor McGregor**

Trevor filled in for Deb Hotchkiss and noted he sits on the Partners in Employment (PIE) board. Serves both Huron and Perth, but has different roles in each county.

PIE helps someone search out job opportunities and help obtain certain certificates (e.g. Smart Serve). Targeted programs for specific groups, i.e.; older workers.

They have approximately 30 staff, who work closely with Ontario Works, PIE can help clients move from Ontario Works to the world of work. They also help with resumes, and skills training programs. In the past, there were multiple agencies providing service, so the government moved to have less agencies provide services. They do have different connections to provide service for different client needs.

Community Living School to Work program. This program started at South Huron DHS in Exeter. They realized that students were leaving school and didn't have any connections with their peers at school. Dan Parr from the Huron Perth Catholic Board, Deb Hotchkiss from PIE, Trevor McGregor from Community Living and Dave Higgins from AMDSB worked together on the program. Both boards commit funds for the program. The program is now in 7 secondary schools and has 165 students, 65 jobs have been found for students. Ten are full time employment. Quite an impactful program. The value is not in just finding a job, it also gives a student confidence and help them feel valued. Believe this committee can continue to influence the board to continue to fund this program. Inclusion provides so many great benefits for students, need to extend this to their world after school. Students will require less time and funding from their agency, since they have employment. The other outcome, when students are 18/19, they are leaving school and not staying just because they can stay until they are 21. They leave with their friends, who are graduating at the same time/age. Work can take place during school, but can also be after school. If a student is bussed to school, efforts are made to find a placement in their home community. That way, if the student has an opportunity to work on the weekend, they are able to do so.

Discussion held about funding sources.

[www.partnersinemployment.on.ca](http://www.partnersinemployment.on.ca)

Katie thanked Trevor for his presentation.

### **3.2 Autism Ontario – Doris Barkley**

Background: In 1973, by group of parents, concerned about their children. Founded the Ontario Society for Autistic Children. In 1985 the name was changed to Autism society for Autistic Citizens and from there in 1991, to the Autism Society of Ontario. There are twenty five chapters in Ontario,

all under the mandate of the board of directors. Vision is acceptance for all individuals on the spectrum, and to achieve quality of life. Lay the ground work, so people know where to access services and help. More of an outreach program for families, which is funded by the province. Our chapter has been able to give financial support to families. For example, give \$500 for children to access iPad/iPods, camp registration, etc. Doris has brochures for the different supports available. Autism Ontario has developed many resources and information on the Autism Ontario website.

[www.autismontario.ca](http://www.autismontario.ca)

Question: offer hands on services? Mostly research based, programs for siblings, other events for people with autism, support groups and activities for families. For example, we rent the whole movie theatre in Goderich on a Saturday morning for families to meet others and support each other. Autism Ontario also provides scholarships for people on the spectrum. Katie thanked Doris for her presentation.

### **3.3 Special Education Plan update – Helen Finch**

Section 13.0 to be reviewed. Helena noted that she worked with Special Education Consultants Dayna Knott and Mary Lynn Cook McEwen to review and revise this section. Helena explained the changes and asked that everyone read through this so you are familiar with the language. Helena broke the committee into groups to each read a specific section. Also looking for input as to which pyramid to put into the plan.

Concern: quick resource section is great. Took definitions out. Actual quote in material helps the reader understand the text. If the reader is an educator, it will be easier to read. Suggestion to provide a legend that explains the text. Discussion held about the content of the pyramid and additional sections in 13.0. Helena will work on making the suggested revisions.

Handout: Acronyms with more information as to what each acronym means. Using Thing Link. Helena will send to Connie, to post to the SEAC conference.

Katie thanked Helena for her work on the Special Education Plan.

### **3.4 Parent Workshop update – Superintendent Blair**

Looking for a different presenter because Michelle Winner is not available. Dr. Jean Clinton is an associate clinical Professor at McMaster University.

<http://www.prevnet.ca/partners/researchers/dr-jean-clinton>

The only challenge is she doesn't present on the weekends. Checking to see if she can come on a Wednesday or Thursday in May. If the group is ok with Dr. Clinton, we will pursue the booking.

Suggestion to book Michelle Winner for next year.

### **3.5 Student Symposium – Superintendent Blair**

The date is scheduled for February 24 (February 26 for snow day) at the Rotary Centre in Stratford. All SEAC members are welcome to attend. Similar to last year, which will be a fun day for school teams. Principals, teachers and students from each school. Nick Foley is the main speaker, lots of activities for everyone, video booth, all to promote inclusion at their schools. Students are chosen by the school admin team, in includes different grades, and different abilities, to get a variety of perspectives on inclusion. Students are given a challenge at the end of the day take back to their schools. Two students will be the MCs for the day. Music is also provided by one of the schools. A student and teacher from GDCI will be chronicling the day through artwork. Let Connie know if you would like to attend.

### **3.6 Dr. Daniel Ansari – Trustee Pratley**

Trustee Pratley noted he is a member of the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) which holds an annual symposium at the end of January. This year, there were some amazing speakers, including Dr. Daniel Ansari, who is a research chair at Western University. His studies include how kids learn math. Trustee Pratley noted he is a very powerful speaker.

#### **Brain myths;**

- We only use 10% of our brain.
- Doing crosswords puzzles keep your brain young.
- A person's personality is either left or right.
- Brain damage is always permanent.
- Drinking alcohol kills brains cells.
- No such thing as a learning style that will cause a student to be a better learner.

Superintendent Blair noted that Dr. Ansari has spoken to some teachers at AMDSB as part of a pilot project.

### **4.0 Trustee Board Report**

No report.

### **5.0 Association Reports**

**Foundations Huron:** Dream Big posters and tickets are available. Also March 23 is a day of Effective Education Advocacy.

**Autism Ontario:** Baseball league in Sebringville will run again. Will send out the flyer.

## **6.0 Additional items:**

None at this time.

## **7.0 Student Senator Reports**

No report

## **8.0 Future Agenda Items**

- Lisa Harper – present on Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario
- Employment for students who leave school for employment. (video: TVO, Autism)
- Orientation for SEAC members (ongoing)
- St. Marys video
- Calendar/plan of what's happening in schools
- Definition of Inclusion
- Budget – Cheri Carter (May, June)
- Parent Workshop. April 22, 2016 at Anne Hathaway P.S.
- Section(s) to be reviewed from the Special Education Plan

## **9.0 Date of Next Meeting**

- March 2, 2016

### **Future Meetings:**

- April 6, 2016
- May 11, 2015 (**Note: this is the second Wednesday of the month.**)
- June 1, 2016
- June 15, 2015 (**Second meeting of the month is for budget.**)

**These dates will be posted on the Board website.**

## **10.0 Adjournment**

Moved by C. Bennewies to adjourn.

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting is adjourned at 5:51 pm.

**Committee Members  
2015 – 2016**

<b>Voting Members</b>	<b>Non-Voting Members</b>	<b>Alternate Members</b>
Katie Fox – Chair <i>Foundations Huron</i>	Greg Haber <i>Elementary Principal Rep</i>	
Marty Krebs – Vice Chair <i>Member at Large</i>	Emma Bannerman <i>Secondary Principal Rep</i>	Mary Lynn MacDonald <i>Member at Large</i>
Lynette Geddes <i>Trustee</i>	Peggy Blair <i>Superintendent of Education</i>	Nancy Rothwell <i>Trustee</i>
Doug Pratley <i>Trustee</i>	Eleanor Salmon <i>System Principal</i>	Randy Wagler <i>Trustee</i>
Terri Sparling <i>Huron Perth Centre</i>	Jane Morris <i>Superintendent of Education</i>	
Jennifer Costello <i>Community Living – St. Marys &amp; Area</i>		
Trevor McGregor <i>Community Living – Stratford &amp; Area</i>		
Doris Barkley <i>Perth District Health Unit Autism Ontario</i>		
Carol Bennewies <i>Member at Large</i>		
Lisa Harper <i>Spina Bifida &amp; Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario</i>		