



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

**Wednesday, December 7, 2016
4:00 pm – Maitland Room
Avon Maitland Education Centre**

Voting Members/

Alternates Present: C. Bennewies, D. Pratley, K. Fox, D. Barkley, J. Costello,

Non-Voting Members: R. Lovell

Staff Present: E. Salmon

Member Regrets: Superintendent Blair, Vice Principal Pfaff, H. Finch, L. Harper, T. McGregor, T. Sparling, M. Krebs, L. Geddes

Guests Present: A. Robinson, C. Rankin

Recorder: C. Trotter

We did not have quorum, so agenda and minutes could not be voted on.

1.0 Routine Matters

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda: _____ seconded by _____

1.2 Approval of the November 2, 2016 SEAC Minutes

Motion to accept the minutes _____ seconded by _____

2.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

2.1

3.0 New Business

3.1 Well-Being Presentation – A. Robinson Mental Health Lead & E. Salmon, System Principal, Learning Services

Principal Salmon introduced Dr. Robinson, who is the Mental Health Lead for the Board. Mentally Healthy Schools workshops have been conducted this year to school administration, Principal, Vice Principal pool members and also to New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP).

What is Mental Health? “a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work with productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community”.
Mental Health or Mental Illness: Dr. Robinson explained the differences. Optimal mental health: 2 continuums, serious to no symptoms, cross with poor mental health and optimal mental health. May have someone who has a diagnosed condition and is doing well with medication and could also have someone with no symptoms, who is not doing well.

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/130580621>

MoE released achieving excellence well-being strand with renewed goals for education, one of the pillars is well being. BIPSA is now BIPSAW to include well - being

If we can do as much as promotion of mental health and well-being for the school, we believe we will have fewer students who need intervention and prevention.

Events we are doing as a board: PD day focussing on Mental Health & Well-Being. Most schools have these programs:

Mind-Up, emotional regulation strategies, Social Thinking. There is also a K-8 Healthy Kids Community challenge. Health units are involved, with the Health Schools Framework. Resource: Supporting Minds document, which the Ministry has released ([Link to Supporting Minds document.](#))

Other programs & supports are Mental Health First Aid, Ross Greene Collaborative and Proactive Solutions, Student Support Team, Strive program which has grown from 7 to 21 schools & is in the first year for a secondary school, Health unit nurses, CCAC MHAN, Choices for Change, Suicide Prevention & Intervention - ASIST training. Suicide intervention and post-vention is a two day training in how to intervene when there is a student who is suicidal. Intervention: helpline and crisis response, CCAC MHAN, Huron Perth Centre, Children's Aid Society, Choices for Change, medical doctors, Family Health Teams, shelters, police, Huron Perth situation table, Prevention & Early Intervention Program (PEPP), Tragic Events Response Support Team (TERST), Section 23, with partners at Romeo, Clinton and Anne Hathaway schools.

Upstream Thinking: <http://www.thinkupstream.net/>

We have completed a lot of work with all Administration. Many schools are developing whole school approaches, as we know it has an impact, hear about kids doing mindful activities. Principals learning about the pyramid, is so important because this is where it starts. Research shows that the most impactful place for improving student well-being in the school is the classroom, so that's the next focus.

Mindful activity: Minute meditation.

<http://www.onemomentmeditation.com/>

Starfish breathing technique. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuIK15fx4JA>

Supporting well-being in AMDSB: is a positive sense of self, spirit and belonging that we feel when our cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs are being met. It is supported through equity and respect for our diverse identities and strengths.

The Ministry of Education is seeking feedback, on their engagement portal which is available until January 15, 2017

Link: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/wellbeing2.html

Katie thanked Eleanor and Anne for their presentation.

3.2 Empower & Lexia in the Classroom – C. Rankin, Teacher, Section 23

We have implemented these two reading programs in the Section 23 class. We have students with behaviour challenges that can't be met in the regular classroom. Classroom goals: literacy, numeracy, social skills, self-regulation, self-advocacy, written output, grit, and fun.

Colin told the group about his background and what brought him to the Section 23 class at Anne Hathaway P.S.

Colin believes that literacy leads to confidence.

Student profiles: they want to succeed, may have lagging academic skills, and social skills, difficulty self-regulating and impulse control, behaviour difficulties, Some of the students would rather be at school than most other places, have experienced trauma (fight/flight responses are intense).

Colin explained how the Empower program works. Developed by the Hospital for Sick Kids. AMDSB has trained teachers throughout the board, with more teachers being trained. This helps younger students read before they get frustrated. There are 120 lessons within the program.

Empower and Lexia are very similar.

Lexia can be done online anywhere, and includes 100 minutes per week.

Awesome visuals. Kids can do units in Lexia, rather than show grade or reading levels, which can get discouraging.

Question: How do you decide if the student needs Empower or Lexia? Answer:

Colin: If a student is struggling and they need Empower, they should have Lexia as well because the two programs go better together.

Question: I work with adults with learning disabilities, do you think Lexia can help? Answer: Yes, it can help. Adult Empower being tested in Texas right now.

There is a Lexia Core 5 version for older students. Must put in 100 minutes a week to be effective.

Question: Are you seeing fewer behaviours as students to better with reading?

Answer: If reading is difficult, then behaviours go up. Will let you know at the end of the year.

The students usually stay in the Section 23 class all year. Transitions usually happen at the end of the year, Christmas or March Breaks. Average stay is about 1 ½ years. The transition can take up to 2 months. Focus of Colin's work is literacy and numeracy.

Discussion held on how the program works and how it can be tailored to each student.

Katie thanked Colin for his presentation.

4.0 Trustee Board Report

Trustee Pratley reported the Board's inaugural meeting was held on December 6th and Randy Wagler was elected Chair, and Alyson Kent was re-elected Vice Chair. Annually Trustee committee preferences are assigned following the

inaugural and while the motion is not approved at this time, a poll vote will be conducted later this week. Trustees Geddes and Pratley were assigned SEAC again, with Trustees Rothwell and Hunking as alternate.

Trustee Pratley noted he has been approached by a few parents to answer questions relative to inclusion and SCC classes. The Board is committed to creating positive, inclusive learning environments and this is embedded in the Board's Strategic Plan.

System Principal Salmon noted students are able to be in a classroom with their peers and able to experience what their peers are experiencing.

Katie Fox noted that inclusion means that all kids are together learning, including coop experiences, cafeteria, etc. and kids are more prepared for the 'real world'.

Trustees Geddes and Pratley will work with Learning Services staff and Finance staff to provide feedback to the parent's questions.

5.0 Association Reports

Perth District Health Unit: Had a meeting with school based nurses, case conference, and decrease of social skills with increase of technology. iPads are great, but where will the students be in 10-15 years with social skills. Discussion followed regarding how much time is spent on technology in class.

6.0 Future Agenda Items

- Orientation for SEAC members
- Calendar/plan of what's happening in schools
- Definition of Inclusion
- Budget – Cheri Carter (February, May, June)
- Parent Workshop
- Transition planning
- Addressing increase of technology and how it's affecting social skills (Doris)

7.0 Date of Next Meeting

- January 11, 2017

Future Meetings:

- February 1, 2017
- March 1, 2017
- April 5, 2017
- May 10, 2017 (**Note: this is the second Wednesday of the month.**)
- May 31, 2017
- June 7, 2017

These dates will be posted on the Board website.

8.0 Adjournment

Moved by _____ to adjourn.

No quorum.

The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting is adjourned at _____.

**Committee Members
2016 – 2017**

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members	Alternate Members
Katie Fox – Chair <i>Foundations Huron</i>	Ruth Lovell <i>Elementary Principal Rep</i>	
Marty Krebs – Vice Chair <i>Member at Large</i>	Helena Finch <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>	Missy Pfaff <i>Vice Principal</i>	Alyson Kent <i>Trustee</i>
Terri Sparling <i>Huron Perth Centre</i>	Jane Morris <i>Superintendent of Education</i>	
Jennifer Costello <i>Community Living – St. Marys & Area</i>		
Trevor McGregor <i>Community Living – Stratford & Area</i>		
Doris Barkley <i>Perth District Health Unit Autism Ontario</i>		
Carol Bennewies <i>Member at Large</i>		
Lisa Harper <i>Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario</i>		