



**Special Education Advisory Committee
(SEAC) Meeting
November 23, 2023 - 4:00 p.m.**

Members present: S. Binder, S. Lewis, N. Hamilton, A. Card, A. Brennan, R. Glenn, W. Haystead, R. Howard, J. Christie, S. Ward, E. Reynolds

Absent: L. Rashotte, D. Vanderkloet, A. James, E. Cotman, J. Parker, L. Solski

Resource: T. Whittaker, C. Breau, K. Dostaler, S. Taylor-Harvey

Minutes: J. Kezar

1. Call to order

Chair Brennan called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting.

2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

Trustee Lewis offered the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Roll Call

Chair Brennan requested a roll call of members.

4. Approval of the agenda

Mover: Shannon Binder

Seconder: Elizabeth Reynolds

That the agenda for the November 23, 2023 Special Education Advisory Committee meeting be approved.

Carried

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There was no conflict of interest declared.

6. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

(a) October 26, 2023

Mover: Richelle Glenn

Seconder: Stacey Lewis

That the minutes of the October 26, 2023 meeting be approved.

Carried

7. Delegations/Presentations

a) Tier 1 Oral Language Narrative

Megan Mertins, Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP), and Tealle Plant, Communicative Disorders Assistant (CDA), provided an overview of the Tier 1 Oral Language Narrative Program which has been implemented in most Grade 2 classrooms within Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB). The program runs for eight to ten weeks and targets two key early reading skills of vocabulary and language comprehension. The program utilizes the research-based Story Champs program to promote oral language through storytelling. It was noted that 81% of children with emotional or behavioural difficulties are found to have an underlying oral language deficit (Hollo et. Al 2014).

Of 198 Grade 2 students tested in the fall (before and after engaging in the program):

- 32.3% of students began the program below expectation for listening comprehension.
- 51% of students began the program below expectation for expressive story retelling.
- 85.5% of students who had pre-test scores below expectation, made gains in their listening comprehension skills.
- 96% made gains in their expressive storytelling post program.
- 50% of the respondents were satisfied with the program, and 50% were extremely satisfied.
- 100% of teachers felt the program was beneficial for students.

Trustee Lewis questioned if the program was implemented in other boards, and Megan Mertins responded.

b) Grade 7 and 8 Mental Health Literacy Module Implementation Plan

Superintendent Dostaler referred to the report contained in the agenda package, which outlined an implementation plan for the Grade 7 and 8 Mental Health Literacy Modules that will become mandatory for instruction beginning January 2024. A number of professional learning sessions have been scheduled for Grade 7 and 8 teachers, to provide culturally responsive, evidence-informed student mental health promotion, prevention, and early intervention services that respect students as complex individuals and provide appropriate supports for their diverse needs.

8. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

9. Staff Reports

a) Draft Special Incidence Portion (SIP) letter

Superintendent Dostaler recapped the discussion from the October meeting, where members supported drafting an advocacy letter to the Ministry to request a review of the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding allotment (using same size board comparators), and to advocate for increased funding for boards. A draft letter was distributed to members, who were asked to review and provide feedback by December 4, 2023.

Superintendent Dostaler will share the letter with members of the Senior Administration team, before forwarding it on to the Ministry of Education.

b) SEAC school newsletter insert

Chair Brennan referred members to the SEAC school newsletter insert, contained in the agenda package. The insert will be forwarded to schools for inclusion in school newsletters and on school websites.

c) Sub-committee updates

Chair Brennan noted that work has continued within the two sub-committee groups: Mental Health and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) with meetings occurring outside of SEAC. The following updates were shared:

Mental Health

- No update was shared, as the next meeting is scheduled for mid-December. An update will be provided at the January meeting.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

- A parent-friendly draft of the IEP brochure was shared. The brochure may be changed into a one page (2 sided document).
- Members will continue to review feedback, which included adding the Tier 1, 2, 3 model on the flow chart and the emphasis of the parent/guardian role at each level.
- Next meeting is December 14, 2023. A draft document will be shared at the January meeting.

10. **Correspondence**

There was no correspondence shared; however, Chair Brennan reminded members that elections for the position of Chair and Vice-chair will occur at the December meeting. Chair Brennan shared that she will not be moving forward as SEAC Chair next year.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.