

# Minutes of the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held in the Auditorium, Georgetown District High School, Georgetown, Ontario, on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## Present

Amy McKenzie: **Chair** (Halton Council of Home and School Associations); Veerle Ryckewaert (Autism Ontario-Halton Chapter); Lori Aker (Alternate-Halton Down Syndrome Association); Jason Bartlett (Member at Large); Kathryn Bateman-Olmstead (Alternate-Trustee); Dianna Bower (Alternate-Trustee); Lynn Trevisan: **Vice-Chair** (Member at Large); Sherry Foster (Association for Bright Children); Rebecca Kennedy (Easter Seals Society); Judy Shiels (VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children);

## **Board Liaison and Resource Personnel:**

David Boag (Superintendent); Sue Roszell (Principal of Special Education); Pamela Cooley (Assistant); Lisa Griffiths (PSSP); Margaret Nimigan (HEPA); Margaret Kew (HSPA)

## Regrets

Vicki De Mone (Alternate-Tourette Syndrome Association); Heather Holden (Alternate-Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Jackie Bevers (Member at Large); Jason Barr (Alternate-Canadian Mental Health Association); Kristen Lochhead (Trustee); Jennifer Hlusko (Trustee); Lori Kafato (Alternate- Association for Bright Children); Diane Vandebossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Paulyne Lack (Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario);

## Absent

Maureen Smithers (Alternate-Halton Council of Home and School Associations); Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Easter Seals Society); Radhika Subramanyan (Canadian Mental Health Association); Patricia Molnar (PSSP);

## **0. OPENING**

### 0.1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

### 0.2. Approval of the Agenda

**S. Foster/V. Ryckewaert                    #37-11**

“THAT the agenda be approved.”

**CARRIED**

## **1. PRESENTATION**

### 1.1. Jo Anne Trigg-Autism Services

J. Trigg provided an update on HDSB Autism services, including the staffing initiatives within the board and an overview of the services provided. She also provided an overview of ABA training.

Discussion took place regarding data tracking on ABA services at the Ministry and Board level, including the ABA survey that was created by the Ministry. It was noted that parents don't have enough information about data related to students with Autism in the schools.

J. Trigg provided an overview of the MDST (Multi-Disciplinary Support Team). She explained what types of students would require these services and how the referral process works.

## **2. CALL FOR NOTICES OF MOTION/REPORTS TO THE BOARD**

None

## **3. ACTION**

### **3.1. Minutes of September Meeting**

**V. Ryckewaert/J. Bartlett 38#-11**

“THAT the Minutes of the September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 meeting be approved.”

**CARRIED**

### **3.2. Special Education Plan Review**

D. Boag reminded members that the plan is currently being revised to reflect the current practices within the HDSB. The language and dates will be cleaned up, and inaccuracies and outdated information will be eliminated. Members were asked to give feedback on the section that was sent out recently, and suggestions will be taken back to staff.

A number of edits or suggestions for revisions were provided.

Discussion took place on the Working Together booklet along with the SRT and IEP pamphlet. It was suggested that the plan have links to all 3 documents. There was also discussion about the purpose of each document and when/how parents access them. It was suggested that this be a topic for discussion at a future meeting and that there first be discussion at the Communications committee level.

There was a request for a copy of the Special Education Plan checklist that was sent to the Ministry and a Board Improvement Plan update as well.

It was noted that all documents should be compliant with the Equity and Inclusion Policy. The policy can be found on the Ministry website.

### **3.3. Monthly Reports**

#### **3.3.1. Safe Schools Action Teams Advisory Group**

There is a presentation at the Halton Region building on Oct 5<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm on bullying prevention. There are also workshops for Safe School Action Teams taking place at schools on the same day.

3.3.2. Protocol/Communications Committee

Report provided by J. Bartlett. Report is listed in the Appendix.

3.3.3. Early Learning Program

None

3.3.4. Accessibility Committee

None

3.3.5. Equity and Inclusion Committee

None

3.3.6. P.I.C

The PIC Conference is on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>. There is a need for a volunteer to do the workshop on SEAC. The Chair noted that J. Barr is putting his name forward as SEAC rep for PIC.

#### **4. COMMUNICATION TO SEAC AND CURRENT SUCCESSES**

4.1. Superintendent's Report

There is no written report this month. D. Boag commented on the Assistive Technology camps that were held in the summer by staff and by Bridges. He noted that the grade 8-9 transition camp pilot at Robert Bateman was a success.

D. Boag followed up on the process for providing SLP services that was inquired about last month. Services do not need to go back to SRT the following school year. They may go back to SRT in a rare case such as if the services were marked as complete the previous year.

There are 2 reports going to the board at the next board meeting; one regarding psych assessment wait times, and one regarding early assessment and intervention.

Updated data on wait times will be brought to SEAC in the new year.

4.2. Association Reports

LDAH: The September workshop – Jump Math will be rescheduled for later in the year. Flyers will be emailed for the next workshop shortly.

ABC: Oct 28-29 is the ABC conference and general meeting. There will be speakers and workshops available. The flyer was sent to SEAC. Any questions can be directed to S. Foster.

HDSA: Report provided by L. Aker. Report is listed in Appendix.

4.3. Trustee Reports

K. Bateman-Olmsteaad noted that Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> is Mental Illness Awareness Week. Canadian Mental Health Association is working to de-stigmatize mental health issues.

HDSB is asking for public feedback on the Strategic Plan. This can be done online or at any school.

**5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**6. ASSOCIATION PRESENTATIONS**

6.1. Autism Ontario- Veerle Ryckewaert

V. Ryckewaert provided an overview of Autism Ontario and the services available for the community. She also discussed different diagnoses, and the characteristics of Autism.

**7. SEAC DISCUSSION/QUESTION PERIOD**

It was noted that the bussing issues that took place at the start of the school year have been resolved.

Discussion took place regarding parents being able to try assistive devices for their children before purchasing them. Although the Board does not offer a service to trial an item, ErinOakKids has an Assistive Device Program where parents can speak to an SLP to gain information on devices. It is an open service. Also, Bridges has equipment that can be loaned out.

It was noted that M. Thorpe may be able to clarify how iPads can be used for Assistive Technology.

**8. NEXT AGENDA/ORDER PAPER**

An association presentation is needed for next month. The presentation from the Order Paper may change.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

9.1. Motion to Adjourn

**K. Bateman-Olmstead/J. Shiels #39-11**

“THAT the meeting adjourn.”

**CARRIED**

Time: 9:30

## **Appendix: Monthly Reports and Association Reports**

### Monthly Reports

#### **Communications/Protocol Committee: J. Bartlett**

##### **Background**

The Protocol and Communications committee operates under a dual mandate. Communications activities are currently given higher priority; they are the public face of SEAC and are often time sensitive. Protocol activities are vital to maintaining structure, order and focus to SEAC meetings; these are internally focused activities which are not time sensitive and are accordingly given a lower priority.

##### **Communications Activities**

###### Better communications channel(s) for SEAC to communicate with parents

Design for a “starter” web site consisting of links to information resources on HDSB and association web sites has been sent to David Boag for discussion with Bruce Smith. Site will include a sign-up page for parents, caregivers, etc, to subscribe to future SEAC mailings. Goal is to have sign-up page running prior to IEP night on Oct 13, 2011. As a contingency, a paper based “ballot box” system will be setup for parents to supply email addresses in a secure fashion.

###### Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Application

PRO grant application was not approved. Requests to the Ministry for clarification on reason(s) for denial remain unanswered. Committee is evaluating ability to facilitate parent coffee chat sessions with a greatly reduced budget.

###### SEAC Parent Survey

Draft of survey questions had been circulated to SEAC with deadline of Sept 16, 2011 for comments. Survey questions have been sent to HDSB research group for preparation and approval prior to issuance.

##### **Protocol Activities**

###### SEAC Committee Involvement

List of sitting committees supplied by Don Vrooman is attached in appendix A. This list is pending updates and may not be complete, as such it is for information only at this time. Once list is ratified by HDSB (David Boag and/or David Euale) it will be circulated to SEAC for determination of what additional committees would benefit from SEAC participation.

###### SEAC Committee Striking protocol

Request has been made to review aspects of how a new SEAC is formed and ratify any practices that differ from established policy into a new policy for SEAC approval. Considering the current SEAC is beginning a new term this item will be tabled for future consideration.

###### SEAC Meeting Protocol

The committee has implemented an order paper for every SEAC meeting to track key dates, activities and requests for information. A simple calendar of significant dates has been sent to SEAC, format of this will be reviewed for completeness and clarity.

## Appendix A

Preliminary HDSB committee listing as supplied by Don Vrooman - for information only.

<copy of email message follows>

Hi Jason,

Here is a list of the HDSB committees I'm aware of, but it might not be complete. There are a variety of committees, some of which SEAC members or anyone could audit, others where SEAC members might participate, and still others where SEAC might have no interest or opportunity to participate. Dave Boag or the Director might be better contacts for statutory or staff committees. I've copied them both.

Trustee Committees (membership limited to trustees, proceedings open to public)

- Program & Accommodation Committee
- Communication Committee
- Policy, By-law & Governance Committee

Statutory Committees (Participation may or may not be appropriate)

- Audit Committee
- Student Discipline Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Parent Involvement Committee
- Joint Health & Safety
- Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Students (SALEP)

Staff Advisory Committees

- Active & Safe Routes to School
- French Advisory
- IT Advisory
- Equity & Inclusion (formerly Cultural Proficiency & Diversity)
- Environment
- Poverty Reduction and Social Issues
- Specialist High Skills Major
- Staff & Leadership Development
- Wellness Advisory

Trustee Advisory Committees

- Transportation (will exist if approved by trustees on 5 Oct 2011)

Note, ad hoc or advisory committees are created from time to time for specific purposes, including Boundary Review Committees or Program and Accommodation Review Committees. SEAC's interest would vary.

Hope this is helpful.

Don

Association Reports

**Halton Down Syndrome Association: L. Aker**

**ASSOCIATION UPCOMING MEETINGS OR CONFERENCES:**

The Down Syndrome Association of Ontario Conference is the weekend of October 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. Highlights of the conference include Dr. Ian Manion speaking about mental health issues in the Down syndrome population, and a workshop on experiencing what it's like to have a disability. This conference will have many opportunities for educators to learn about the specific learning style of someone with Down syndrome and we hope that some staff will be able to attend. It is at Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls. Full conference and registration information is at [www.dsao.ca](http://www.dsao.ca).

**NEW INITIATIVES:**

Our association is nominating Imran Moon to be our Alternate SEAC Representative. Imran has 3 sons currently in the HDSB. His youngest son has Down syndrome and is in SK.