

## Minutes of the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held in the Board Room, J.W. Singleton Centre, Burlington Ontario, on September 13<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); Heather Holden (Alternate-Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Jason Bartlett (Member at Large); Jackie Bevers (Member at Large); Jason Barr (Alternate-Canadian Mental Health Association); Kristen Lochhead (Trustee); Jennifer Hlusko (Trustee); Kathryn Bateman-Olmstead (Alternate-Trustee); Dianna Bower (Alternate-Trustee); Lynn Trevisan: **Vice-Chair** (Member at Large); Sherry Foster (Association for Bright Children); Lori Kafato (Alternate- Association for Bright Children); Rebecca Kennedy (Easter Seals Society);

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

David Boag (Superintendent); Sue Roszell (Principal of Special Education); Pamela Cooley (Assistant); Patricia Molnar (PSSP);

### Regrets

Vicki De Mone (Alternate-Tourette Syndrome Association);

### Absent

Maureen Smithers (Alternate-Halton Council of Home and School Associations); Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA) ; Lisa Griffiths (PSSP) Judy Shiels (VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children); Paulyne Lack (Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario); Diane Vandenbossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Easter Seals Society); Radhika Subramanyan (Canadian Mental Health Association);

## **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

J. Hlusko/J. Bevers      **#34-11**

“THAT the agenda be approved.”

**CARRIED**

## **1. PRESENTATION**

### 1.1. Jacki Oxley- Accessibility Report

J. Oxley gave an overview of the Accessibility Plan and also explained how the plan relates to children with IEPs. The plan will be posted on the website for public consultation. Any future questions/comments can be given to V. Ryckewaert as she is the committee representative from SEAC.

There was a request for washroom height facilities to be looked into and also better communication strategies. A big issue that was discussed was the use of people first language and the need for training in this area.

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

None

## 3. ACTION

### 3.1. Minutes of July Meeting

V. Ryckewaert/ J.Hlusko #35-11

“THAT the Minutes of the July 5, 2011 meeting be approved.”

**CARRIED**

### 3.2. SEAC Tracking Form

Discussion took place on the SEAC tracking form. The form still needs to be edited and the process for how it will be used will be further discussed. Editing suggestions are to be received by the next meeting and hopefully it can be voted on in November.

### 3.3. Special Education Plan Review

D. Boag gave an overview on how he would like to see the plan revision process work. Staff will go through the plan standards and bring all revisions to SEAC. This process would start immediately so that the plan revisions would be done early in the new year. There was discussion regarding how a 5 year plan would fit with the revision of the Special Education Plan.

SEAC members would like the staff who worked on the standards to be present at SEAC meetings.

It was noted that monthly reports on the agenda of SEAC meetings could be provided in advance as written reports instead of verbal reports in order to better utilize time at SEAC meetings.

### 3.4. Monthly Reports

#### 3.4.1. Safe Schools Action Teams Advisory Group

Report provided by A. McKenzie. Report is listed in Appendix.

#### 3.4.2. Protocol/Communications Committee

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

The Chair reminded members to review the online survey that was sent out.

#### 3.4.3. Early Learning Program

No updates.

3.4.4. Accessibility Committee

None

3.4.5. Equity and Inclusion Committee

Report provided by D. Bower. There will be a meeting in October to discuss Faith Accommodations and Employment Equity.

3.4.6. P.I.C

The Chair noted that a PIC representative is needed from SEAC. There is a PIC conference on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and a volunteer is needed for the SEAC table.

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

The Chair noted that the Additional Qualification letter was sent out.

4.1. Superintendent's Report

There is no written Superintendent's report this month. D. Boag discussed the Speech Language project and that no proposal went in from HDSB. He discussed psychological assessment wait times and also noted that the Special Education Plan has been posted on the website. The Minority report from LDAH will be added to the plan in the next few weeks.

4.2. Association Reports

HDSA - L. Reid is stepping down from SEAC.

Autism Ontario - Report is listed in the Appendix.

LDAH - Discussed the Summer Assistive Technology sessions that took place and noted they will be hosting 2 Saturdays for parents for AT training.

4.3. Trustee Reports

Trustees noted that the school start has been difficult with transportation issues as First Student is understaffed.

#### **5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

1 question from the public was submitted. It was of a personal nature about support for a non-identified student. D Boag's response was to help re-connect the family with the school for additional problem solving.

#### **6. ASSOCIATION PRESENTATIONS**

6.1. Canadian Mental Health Association – Jason Barr

J. Barr provided an overview of the association and program services available. SEAC members asked if J. Barr could provide some data regarding the number of referrals that CMHA receives that are for people with exceptionalities.

It was noted that further PD on mental health is needed and education to help in the reduction of stigma of mental health.

**7. SEAC DISCUSSION/QUESTION PERIOD**

Registration for Special Olympics will take place through Community Living.

Discussion took place on the following:

- ABA Survey results and the Ministry questionnaire format. There is a presentation from Autism staff in October and ABA will be discussed.
- Budget for Occupational Therapy. D. Boag will provide an update on this.
- Referrals to SLP services needing to be reinitiated each year. D. Boag will look into this.
- The process for computer camp registration. D. Boag will speak to Student Services staff to clarify.

Discussion took place on demission from French. The process for French demission was discussed and it was noted that the discussion will need to be continued later as more data is retrieved.

The process of Optional Attendance was discussed and it was noted that students with special needs are given consideration by principals and superintendents when making decisions.

The process for parent observations of their student in class was also discussed. It was noted that this practice does occur in Halton and that ultimately it is the Principal's decision. It is important to determine what the parent wants to accomplish with the observation and to have the conversation with the Principal about this ahead of time.

There was an article in the paper regarding Rotarians doing volunteer DRA assessments with Burlington Central High School. This article will be sent out to SEAC.

**8. NEXT AGENDA/ORDER PAPER**

The October meeting will be at Georgetown District High School. There will be a presentation from Autism Services and they will discuss the ABA survey. Autism Ontario will also present.

SEAC members would like D. Boag to bring a response about the SLP referral process.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**L. Aker/ S. Foster #36-11**

“THAT the meeting adjourn.”

**CARRIED**

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

### Monthly Reports

#### **Safe Schools Action Teams Advisory Group: A. McKenzie**

October 5<sup>th</sup> all SSATs will be invited to another Board-provided conference on promoting safe school culture at Rattlesnake Point. The speaker is John Linney who has a long history of working with students and using students as front line ambassadors for changing school culture. We'll be premiering the DVD that Nigel Scott and his team worked on, discussing the Forty Developmental Assets that the Board is also promoting for student social and personal skill building and again having time for Teams to work together on strategies for their schools.

On the same evening, EVERYONE is invited to hear John Linney speak again (and I would encourage all Associations to promote this event when the poster comes out) at the Halton Regional Centre. We've been able to provide John's expertise to the general public for parent guidance in bullying prevention. Again, we're trying to move from talking about "bullying" and "bullies" to working on building a safe school culture, where everyone feels comfortable and at home. You MUST pre-register, but it's free.

#### **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

Committee is reviewing design for a "starter" web site consisting of links to information resources on HDSB and association web sites. Site will include as sign-up page for parents, caregiver etc. to subscribe to future SEAC mailings. Goal is to have sign-up page running prior to IEP night on Oct 13, 2011.

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

PRO grant application was not approved. Committee is evaluating ability to facilitate parent coffee chat sessions with a greatly reduced budget.

###### SEAC Parent Survey

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

##### Protocol Activities

###### SEAC Committee Involvement

The committee will contact the HDSB trustees to obtain a list of sitting committees and determine if SEAC should have a seat on these committees. This list will be circulated to SEAC for next meeting.

###### 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.

#### Association Reports

##### **Autism Ontario Halton Chapter association update: V. Ryckewaert**

Autism Ontario-Halton Chapter is starting up all its programs again this fall. New this year is the PEERS Social Skills Group for teens grade 8 – 11. Some of the coming events to celebrate October as Autism Awareness Month are: comedy night with Ben Guyatt (September 24), Stars Shine for Autism (October 1) and Ride Together for Autism (October 9). More information on these events can be found on <http://www.autismhalton.com/>