

Halton District School Board

Minutes of the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee held in the Boardroom, J.W. Singleton Centre, Burlington, Ontario, on April 8, 2008.

Present: Sheri Levy-Abraham (LDAH) (Chair); Jennifer Hlusko (Trustee); Donna Danielli (Trustee); Don Vrooman, (Alt. Trustee); Bruce Jones (Alt. Trustee); Paulyne Lack (Tourette's Syndrome Assoc.); Amy McKenzie (Halton Council of Home and School); Lynn Clark (Easter Seal Society) (Vice Chair); Leslie Howchin (Community Living); Greg Allen (ABC); Bill Elgie (Alt. ABC); Ellen Whitehouse (Alt. Halton Down Syndrome); Craig Newman (Alt. VIEWS); Jacqueline Bevers (Member at Large); Amy Collard (Member at Large); Sara Budworth (Member at Large)

Resource Staff: Kathy Schaffer, Superintendent of Education; Lynnette Dwyer, Secretary; Mark Wickens (HEPA); Michelle Joly (PSSP)

Regrets: Janet Barton (Alt. Community Living)

Absent: Susan Wolak, (VIEWS); Diane Doherty, (Cdn. Mental Health); Cecilia Marie Flynn (Alt. Cdn. Mental Health); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Alt. Easter Seals Society); Maggie Diltz (VOICE); Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA); Lisa Griffiths (PSSP); Mary Jane Farrish (HSPA); Sue Adams (Alt. LDAH);

In Susan Wolak's absence, Craig Newman will be voting member for VIEWS. There are no representatives for Canadian Mental Health Association or VOICE.

Agenda Item 1

1.1 Welcome and Call to Order

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

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked Superintendent Schaffer for supplying copies of all information given out at this meeting to the members of the public attending.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

A. Collard/D. Vrooman

#14-08

“THAT the Agenda be approved.”

CARRIED

Agenda Item 2

2.1 Presentations

Association for Bright Children

Bell Elgie (ABC) presented a PowerPoint on Gifted Education.

K. Schaffer responded to a few of the concerns mentioned during the PowerPoint presentation. Instead of the Information Night on Gifted that has been done in the past, there were information sessions during the day at the schools that have gifted classes. All sessions have taken place and had a very good turn out of parents. For the families that missed out on these sessions, the principals are offering make-up sessions.

For North area parents they were able to visit Hawthorne’s program but are aware that it is being relocated. Details on the plans for the North will be forwarded directly to parents as soon as plans are finalized.

Teachers in high schools with clustered classes have all been offered extra PD sessions. K. Schaffer indicated her belief that Halton needs to examine its policy regarding acceleration.

D. Vrooman asked if L. Dwyer could send, via e-mail, a copy of this PowerPoint to all members of SEAC and HDSB Trustees.

Agenda Item 3

3.1 Call for Notices of Motion/Reports to the Board

None

Agenda Item 4

4.1 Approval of the Minutes

A. Collard /J. Hlusko

#15-08

“THAT the Minutes of the March 4, 2008 meeting be approved with the following change:

Page 4, under Agenda Item 6.1, paragraph 3, change sentence to read:
“S. Levy-Abraham would like to include the Special Education Plan amendments on the order paper”.

CARRIED

4.2 Motions/Reports of last meeting

None

4.3 Order Paper

Motion to develop criteria for fourth area “far north”:

S. Levy-Abraham inquired if this motion has been presented to the board yet and D. Danielli responded that she had included it in her verbal report to the board.

There was discussion between a number of trustee reps and the Chair regarding the methods for advancing a motion to the Board of Trustees. Trustees suggested that SEAC might make presentations to the board or provide a written report to be distributed to trustees. An individual trustee might wish to present a motion on behalf of SEAC, but that would be at the discretion of the trustee. The Chair suggested that motions from SEAC had to be presented to the board as motions.

S. Budworth suggested that SEAC members should speak with the trustee in their area, outside of SEAC, about their concerns.

S. Levy-Abraham indicated that she would contact the Chair of the board to seek further input to the discussion.

Special Education budget revenue and expenditures:

K. Schaffer supplied 2 reports titled 2007/08 Estimated Special Education Envelope. One was from March 2008 and the other from June 2007. She asked that if anyone had questions on these reports, to please e-mail her.

Report list:

Not completed yet, still in process.

Original Satellite Documents:

Still in process.

Special Education Plan Amendments:

K. Schaffer supplied a report titled “Updates on Halton’s Special Education Plan”. She explained and made changes to the Program Relocations section as follows:

- Pr/Jr Life Skills class from MSB to Georgetown South – move from Approved Changes to Tentative Plans
- 2 Gifted classes from Hawthorne Village to Georgetown South – move from Approved changes to Tentative Plans

OPA Results and Stats:

This will be in the Superintendents Report.

Sped Budget:

Details from the 2008-09 funding expected shortly from the Finance department.

Agenda Item 5

5.1 Superintendent's Report

Memo from K. Schaffer given to all and discussed.

5.2 School Board Communications to Parents re: Special Needs Students

None

5.3 Working Group Report

S. Levy-Abraham stated that it is important SEAC have a good understanding of how the board operates. She asked for information on how trustees described their role and SEAC's relationship with the board. She enquired about one of the trustees making a presentation to SEAC on the Governance Model.

J. Hlusko replied that SEAC would need to be very specific as to what they wanted to know.

S. Budworth asked how SEAC should bring recommendations to the board. She agreed that motions are not the way, but would like direction on how SEAC should do this.

Amy Collard suggested providing presentations to the board.

5.4 Chairs Report & Correspondence

The Halton Chapter of OAFCCD is hosting a workshop called "Communicating for Success: Strategies for Effective Partnerships" taking place Wed., April 23 from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. This workshop will help parents of young children with special needs to develop effective partnerships with schools. For more information or to register please call OAFCCD Halton Chapter, Susan 905 849-7720 or Alison 519-842-9506.

The Ontario Association for Education Advocates is having a conference on "Transforming Shared Solutions for All". This is being held Sat. April 26th. An e-mail was sent to SEAC members with all the information.

5.5 Association Reports

ABC is holding their 2008 Conference on May 9-10th. Deadline for registration is Apr. 23rd. For more information, go to www.abc.ca.

5.6 Trustee Reports

Trustee Danielli noted that this has been very busy time. Apr. 30th will be public delegation night to discuss accommodation pressures in Oakville. The Board has a number of boundary studies under review and is planning to build 3 new schools in Milton.

Motion to extend meeting for 10 minutes.

E. Whitehouse/ no seconder

#16-08

DEFEATED

Meeting adjourned.

Time: 9:30 p.m.

Recorded by: Lynnette Dwyer