

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 December 4th, 2007.

Present: Amy Collard (Vice Chair, Member at Large); Jennifer Hlusko, Trustee; Don Vrooman, (Trustee); Amy McKenzie (Halton Council of Home and School); Sheri Levy-Abraham (LDAH); Lynn Clark (Easter Seal Society); Paulyne Lack (Tourette's Syndrome Assoc.); Jacqueline Bevers (Member at Large); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Alt. Easter Seals Society); Ellen Whitehouse (Alt. Halton Down Syndrome); Craig Newman (Alt. VIEWS); Cindy Faria (Autism Ontario); Greg Allen (ABC); Maggie Diltz (VOICE);

Resource Staff: Kathy Schaffer, Superintendent of Education; Lynnette Dwyer, Secretary; Lisa Griffiths (PSSP);

Regrets: Donna Danielli (Chair, Trustee); Mark Wickens, (HEPA); Susan Wolak, (VIEWS); Diane Doherty, (Cdn. Mental Health); Cecilia Marie Flynn (Alt. Cdn. Mental Health); Leslie Howchin (Community Living); Janet Barton (Alt. Community Living); Sara Budworth (Member at Large); Sue Adams (Alt. Learning Disabilities);

Absent: Michelle Joly (Alt. PSSP); Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA); Mary Jane Farrish (HSPA); Mary Elizabeth Dilly (Trustee)

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

In Donna Danielli's absence, Amy Collard will Chair the meeting. In Susan Wolak's absence Craig Newman will be voting member for VIEWS.

A. Collard welcomed new SEAC member Greg Allen, representative for the Association for Bright Children.

1. Approval of Agenda

L. Clark/J. Hlusko

#70-07

“THAT the Agenda be approved with the inclusion of a report from the Working Group”.

CARRIED

2. Minutes of Meeting October 2nd, 2007

L. Clark/M. Diltz

#71-07

“THAT the Minutes of the November 6th, 2007 meeting be approved”.

CARRIED

3. Call for Notices of Motion

None

4. Matters Arising

- Responses to Questions

Superintendent Schaffer gave out her written report on the Follow-up CODE Project Results 2006-07 and a list of schools that are largely wireless. Discussion followed.

Superintendent Schaffer also gave out her written report on the Summary of Recent October Report Data. Discussion followed.

5. Working Group Report

S. Levi-Abraham reviewed the purpose of the working group that was created as a response to the SEAC majority report shared with trustees in June. She mentioned that the working group have met about 2 – 3 times in the summer and have not met since. She was going to put together a report on what other SEAC committees do and would like help from SEAC members to work on this report. She would like any members to e-mail and let her know if they can assist her.

L. Clark offered 2 documents “The Effective SEAC Member” and “SEAC Regulation 464 – 97” and asked L. Dwyer to make copies for all SEAC members.

6. Draft of Funding Expenditures

Superintendent Schaffer handed out her Draft report on Recommendations for new Special Education Funding. She explained this report and discussion followed.

7. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Schaffer distributed her written report and discussions followed. She thanked all who attended the Stuart Ablon workshop on Collaborative Problem Solving.

8. Chair's Report

A. Collard expressed D. Danielli's regrets at not being able to attend the meeting this evening, as she had to attend an accommodation meeting in her ward.

A Collard also mentioned that she had attended the Stuart Ablon workshop and found it extremely interesting.

9. Association Reports

E. Whitehouse (Halton Down Syndrome Assoc.) noted that her association will be having their Christmas party on December 15th. She also spoke of an article in the Hamilton Spectator about a high school principal who won an award for helping integrate students with special education into regular classrooms. She would like to have him as a guest speaker at some point. The article will be sent to members via e-mail.

L. Clark (Easter Seals Society) inquired if SEAC would be having a social gathering to get to know each other, as there are quite a few new members.

A. Collard suggested that something could be planned for January.

10. Trustee Reports

J. Hlusko (Trustee) noted that all municipalities are dealing with an increased enrolment crisis. Trustees are involved in studies on this problem. Parents want to know in June where their children will be going in September. Halton is one of the fastest growing boards. With the ministry's announcement of full time JK/SK, Halton trustees are very concerned that we will not have space to accommodate the expansion of this program. J. Hlusko is supportive of the concept to the focus on the early years but predicted that the change would impact on the provision of special education programs and services.

J. Hlusko advised SEAC of the Election of new chair at this Wednesday's board meeting.

11. Correspondence

None

12. Discussion/Question Period

J. Bevers gave a report to Kathy on the Special Education Plan and would like it sent out to SEAC.

S. Levi-Abraham noted that there was not an LD representative sitting on SEAC at time of this report.

K. Schaffer provided clarification that the school board staff are using LDAO's definition to make a diagnosis of learning disabilities.

S. Levi-Abraham asked that SEAC receive a copy of the board's response to the Ministry regarding the review of IEP's. She requested an additional copy of the report.

K. Schaffer responded that a formal response to the Ministry was not required. Ministry recommendations were incorporated into the fall IEP training. One issue that has not yet been addressed is the potential of the Ministry's template. K. Schaffer will work on getting a password for SEAC's use.

S. Levi-Abraham requested the timing regarding when financial information is presented to board quarterly.

J. Hlusko will let her know.

E. Whitehouse requested that S. Levi-Abraham provide SEAC with data regarding successful instructional methods for students with learning disabilities.

S. Levi-Abraham will put something together for a future meeting.

13. Current Successes

C. Faria (Autism Ontario) mentioned that her Association had their Christmas party and there were at least 130 children in attendance. She noted that a lot more children attended the party, than had in previous years.

14. Next Agenda

E. Whitehouse (Down Syndrome Assoc.) would like the funding piece to be on next agenda.

K. Schaffer mentioned that there will be an in-service in January for new Special Education Resource Teachers. Traditionally a volunteer from SEAC has presented a short explanation on the role of SEAC. The in-service will be taking place at 12:30 on Friday, January 11, 2008 at the New Street Education Centre on New Street in Burlington. J. Hlusko agreed to represent SEAC at this event.

Adjournment

C. Newman/P. Lack

#72-07

“THAT the meeting adjourn.”

CARRIED

Time: 8:55 p.m.

Recorded by: Lynnette Dwyer