

# 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 May 6, 2008.

Present: Sheri Levy-Abraham (LDAH) (Chair); Jennifer Hlusko (Trustee); Donna Danielli (Trustee); Don Vrooman, (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); Sue Adams (Alt. LDAH); Jacqueline Bevers (Member at Large); Amy Collard (Member at Large)

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

Regrets: Susan Wolak, (VIEWS); Bruce Jones (Alt. Trustee); Karen Poole-Lawrence (Alt. Easter Seals Society)

Absent: Diane Doherty (Cdn. Mental Health); Cecilia Marie Flynn (Alt. Cdn. Mental Health); Maggie Diltz (VOICE); Lynne Gurzi (HDEAA); Mary Jane Farrish (HSPA); Janet Barton (Alt. Community Living); Sara Budworth (Member at Large); Michelle Joly (PSSP)

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 7:15 p.m.

The Chair welcomed everyone. She noted the changes to the agenda with time limits in the hopes of finishing on time. There is a new agenda item "Questions from the public". Any member of the public with questions, please complete the form provided and hand in to either the Chair or Vice-chair.

### 1.2 Approval of Agenda

A. Collard/C. Vrooman

#17-08

**"THAT the Agenda be approved."**

**CARRIED**

**Agenda Item 2**

2.1 Presentations

None

**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 /A. McKenzie

**#18-08**

**“THAT the Minutes of the April 8, 2008 meeting be approved.**

**CARRIED**

4.2 Motions/Reports of last meeting

None

4.3 Order Paper

SERT Allocation Secondary

K. Schaffer gave a report titled SERT Allocation 2008-09 - Secondary and explained. Questions followed.

Special Education budget revenue and expenditures:

Given the complexity of the revised budget and 2006-07 financial year-end data, please e-mail specific questions to S. Levy-Abraham who will forward them to Steven Parfeniuk, Superintendent of Business Services for responses.

Report list:

S. Levy-Abraham advised that she will aim to have this work completed by September 2008.

Original Satellite Documents:

S. Levy-Abraham handed out copies of 1987 Lord Elgin High School documents on the Satellite Program. She also has documents with student's explanation of what they thought of the program. She will need to delete the names before sending everyone copies.

Bill Elgie arrived at 7:35p.m.

Special Education Plan Amendments:

To meet the 2008 Ministry requirements, a letter will be sent to outline any changes to the service delivery of programs and services for students with special education needs.

K. Schaffer provided some documents listing past and up-coming changes. Some changes include the provision of new placements and an increase in direct service to students. Other changes are simply moves as a result of accommodation decisions. Some classes have been closed due to low numbers or a philosophical change in the intermediate behaviour delivery model.

Information was also provided on the updated role description for Learning Resource Teachers for 2008-09. The role is focused on peer coaching, beginning at the K-1 level. Staff allocation will be maintained at 20, but a small school might only have ½ a person and larger school will have a whole person.

D. Vrooman requested information on the number of students and staff impacted by the movement of self-contained classes.

S. Levy-Abraham strongly disagrees with funding Learning Resource Teachers out of the Special Education budget. She feels that the Special Education budget should only be used for students with special education needs. She would like to see the LRT's removed from Spec. Ed. budget.

E. Whitehouse noted that LRT's do target kids who are clearly behind even though they are not formally identified.

J. Bevers is pleased that LRT's will be also supporting teachers who are instructing older elementary students.

K. Schaffer also provided a working document that highlighted specific areas of concerns, changes made to date, and possible direction for the future.

Given pressures of time, SEAC members were encouraged to e-mail K. Schaffer with specific questions. Further discussion will be planned for future meetings.

Sped Budget:

Further information will be shared at the June meeting.

ABC Recommendations:

K. Schaffer shared some rough notes on Big Issues regarding Gifted Programming in Halton as a vehicle for continuing discussions on recommendations to improve gifted programming.

G. Allen's recommendation would be to identify the students before grade 5. Preferably grade 1. Alteration of our current identification process could have a significant budget implication, which may need to be captured in the 2008-09 budget.

ABC reps and other interested members will try to gather for a small work group/sub-committee meeting prior to our next SEAC meeting.

Agenda Item 5

5.1 Superintendent's Report

K. Schaffer handed out her memo and a brief discussion followed.

K. Schaffer asked for a SEAC representative to attend the Regional Consultation Session on the planned revision of the document *Education for All*. The meeting will be held on May 27<sup>th</sup> in Burlington. Please e-mail S. Levy-Abraham, if you can attend that day.

5.2 School Board Communications to Parents re: Special Needs Students

None

5.3 Working Group Report

S. Levy-Abraham asked if anyone would be interested in meeting, as a group, just prior to the next SEAC meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at around 5:30 or whatever is convenient. Please e-mail her if you are interested in participating in this meeting and ideas on where to meet and the most convenient time.

J. Bevers suggested meeting for dinner and discussion.

B. Elgie requested clarification on the purpose of the working group.

S. Levy-Abraham explained that SEAC would like to better understand proper ways of communicating with the board.

5.4 Chairs Report & Correspondence

The Chair noted that the Board had received a submission for two new SEAC representatives for Autism Ontario. This will be presented to the board for approval at the May 21st Board meeting.

The Chair received a letter from the Chair of SEAC for the TDSB regarding Bill 52 and asking the Ministry for additional funding. She will scan and send a copy to all.

Sheridan is presenting STEPS 2008 taking place over 4 days starting July 14<sup>th</sup> to July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Fliers were handed out with all the information.

### 5.5 Association Reports

Amy McKenzie (Halton Council of Home and School Associations) advised that The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations (OFHSA) had their annual general meeting and Conference “Parents On Board” this past weekend at Sheridan. Together as parents we represent thousands and thousands of volunteer hours spent partnering with schools to deliver everything from reading programs to hot lunches and hundreds of thousands of fundraising dollars. Halton Council of Home and School Associations was particularly grateful for the excellent representation from our Board, with workshop speakers such as Jacki Oxley (Coping with Bullying), Dave Lewis (High Skills Diploma) and our Trustee, Don Vrooman (The Role of the Trustee). Director Wayne Joudrie also spoke at the Saturday night supper and was certainly well received there. There were also three separate workshops with a technology focus, including Smart Boards, which many Home and School Associations are currently working on the fundraising for. The final Town Hall session let parents across the province share best practices and network ideas. Informed parents are better partners with their Board and the Ministry of Education, and in that regard the Conference was a great success.

S. Levi-Abraham wanted to remind everyone that Ministry reps would be coming to speak at the Burlington Rotary East Centre on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 - 12:30. There is a fee of \$20. for non-members and \$10. for members.

### 5.6 Trustee Reports

D. Danielli noted that it is still a very busy time. There have been additional meetings to hear delegations from the public regarding the two PARC accommodation studies as well as a number of boundary reviews. Trustees are also working on Transportation initiatives and the Capital Plan. Student Excellence awards took place last week. The Ministry approved a \$60M budget to build 3 new schools in Milton.

#### **Agenda Item 6**

##### Questions from the Public:

Three question papers were given to K. Schaffer and she read them out loud and answered.

#### **Agenda Item 7**

##### SEAC Discussion/Questions:

E. Whitehouse explained her motion to the board regarding criteria for a fourth area “Far North”. She believes the board needs to be on top of the population boom in the north regarding the special education staff that will be needed in that area.

D. Danielli offered clarification on what the board is doing at this time.

***Motion to extend the meeting to 9:45***

E. Whitehouse/P. Lack

#19-08

**“THAT the meeting be extended to 9:45 p.m.”**

**CARRIED**

E. Whitehouse’s second issue is discussion on EA’s being assigned to more than one child. She wanted to point out that substitution does not promote independence. She feels that having more than one EA per child creates problems. She prefers planned independence for the students.

J. Bevers attended Halton Accessibility Showcase and found it interesting that the *Working Together* document was of great interest. She also attended the Learning Centre Conference and enjoyed it very much.

Reminder that the Special Athletes Track Meet is taking place May 29<sup>th</sup> at Nelson H. S.

J. Bevers noted that we have received 14 nominations for Support for Special Education Students Awards and 1 student nomination for Outstanding Achievement Award. These will be presented around the end of June and she would like volunteers to help present awards. Please let her know if you can help.

**Agenda Item 8**

**8.1 Review of Additions to Order Paper**

- ABC discussion of recommendations
- Questions and e-Mails to Kathy on budget
- Future directions for Special Education

**8.2 Review of Meeting Process**

None

**8.3 Motion to Adjourn**

A. Collard/P. Lack

#20-08

**“THAT the meeting adjourn.”**

**CARRIED**

Time: 9:46 p.m.

Recorded by: Lynnette Dwyer