

HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee – (Hybrid Meeting)

Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 7:00 pm

MINUTES

Present: Naveed Ahmed (Trustee); Carole Baxter (Trustee); Evelyn Bursey (Community Living North Halton); Alison Brindle (Centre for Diverse Learners-Halton); Robbie Brydon (Trustee); Evelyn Bursey (Community Living North Halton); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Society); Surekha Kanithi (Association for Bright Children); Kajsa; Klassen (Member At Large); Kate Lambacher (Association for Bright Children); Sarah Lansley (Easter Seals Society); Jennifer Legare (Autism Ontario); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Katie Schleifer (Member At Large); Melissa Somer (Member At Large); Erin Sproule (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children); Nadia Toric (Community Living Burlington); Kathy Turner (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children), Amanda Winch (Autism Ontario)

Staff: Stacey Farrell Bangerter, (Vice-Principal, Special Education) Colette Ruddock (Superintendent Special Education); Conan Spruin (Principal, Special Education); Marta Zammit (Office Supervisor, Special Education)

Regrets: Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Diane Vandenbossche (Centre for Diverse Learners-Halton)

1.0 Opening

1.1 Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Brindle called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1.2 Honouring the Land and Territory

Chair Brindle read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands.

1.3 Approval of Agenda

#214-23

Moved by: E. Sproule

Seconded by: K. Turner

Be it resolved that the October 3, 2023 agenda for the Special Education Advisory Committee be

Street Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario L7P 5A8

Mailing Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • P.O. Box 5005, Stn. LCD 1, Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z2

Phone: 905-335-3663 | 1-877-618-3456 Fax: 905-335-9802

www.hdsb.ca

approved as presented.

Carried Unanimously

1.4 Minutes of September 13, 2023

#215

Moved by:

Seconded by:

The approval of the September 13, 2023 meeting minutes have been deferred until the November SEAC meeting, pending a review by staff/chair of Robert's Rules to determine whether committee members' questions are to be included in meeting minutes.

2.0 Action

2.1 Anti-Sex Trafficking Education Presentation

S. Farrell Bangerter, Special Education Vice Principal presented on Anti-Sex Trafficking Education. There was an opportunity for questions after the presentation. More information can be found [here](#).

2.2 Presentation from VOICE

Erin Sproule and Kathy Turner provided a presentation on the Past, Present and Future of VOICE. More information can be found [here](#). There was an opportunity for questions after the presentation.

2.3 TVDSB Letters to the Ministry of Education

Letters shared for information purposes.

- [SIP Funding Letter](#)
- [GSN Insufficiencies](#)

Chair Brindled acknowledged that in June 2022, following a SEAC motion that was passed that month, a letter was written to the Minister of Education expressing concerns about inadequate Special Education funding. It was noted that, as of the current date, no response has been received from the Ministry.

A question was raised by a member of the public regarding the location of the aforementioned letters. Chair Brindle clarified that these letters can be found in the meeting minutes of June 2022 and committed to ensuring that the minutes are updated on the website.

Committee members engaged in a discussion about whether a follow-up with the Minister of

Education is necessary, given that no response has been received to date. Trustee Baxter offered to bring this matter to the attention of the Chair of the Board, highlighting her role in communicating with the Ministry on SEAC's behalf. Chair Brindle also suggested inquiring with the Board Chair about the appropriateness of sending another letter and determining the next course of action for SEAC.

3.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period

Discussion took place regarding CPP literacy highlighting the importance of sufficient resources and staff training. Superintendent Ruddock highlighted that staff is currently in the process of formulating a plan and resources for students within the CPP programs. Furthermore, it was mentioned that elementary/secondary special education resource teachers are undergoing Wilson training. Once the plan is implemented, it will be shared with SEAC. It was emphasized that the ongoing school year will primarily focus on laying the foundation for the program, with the intention of its full implementation for students in the following academic school year. Additional details were provided regarding Wilson training and its procedures.

Chair Brindle clarified the procedure for selecting SEAC representation for board committees. It was acknowledged that certain members assigned to committees as representatives have yet to receive contact information. Staff/chair to follow up to ensure the appropriate distribution of contact details for each committee. SEAC will conduct a review of the process for selecting and changing representation in the future.

4.0 Communication to SEAC

4.1 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Ruddock extended a warm welcome to the new SEAC members representing Autism Ontario, as well as the alternate representative from Community Living North Halton. Additionally, C. Spruin delivered an update on the parenting coaching session designed for parents with children with ASD.

The following was also shared:

- 1. CCAT7 Administration:** The process for the administration of the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test begins in October. Families of Gr. 4 students attending have been notified of the process and students will participate in the assessment in the coming weeks. More information can be found on the board's website:

<https://www.hdsb.ca/learning-and-resources/Pages/Special-Education-Programs-and-Placements.as>

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2. October 2023 Self-Contained Classes - Each year, we examine our complement of needs and self-contained classes / locations to determine whether we need to open, close or consolidate classes. Below is a summary of changes for October 2023.

M - Move O - Open C - Close

CLASS / LOCATION	M	O	C	RATIONALE
Life Skills		X		3 Life Skills class were opened at each of Tiger Jeet Singh PS, Alexander's and McKenzie-Smith Bennett Public Schools
Learning Disabilities	x		x	1 LD class was moved from Irma Coulson to Robert Little PS 1 LD class closed at Pineland PS
Gifted			x	J/I Gifted class at Pilgrim Wood P/J Gifted class at Sam Sherratt *Note: Secondary Gifted Cluster site will expand to Garth Webb SS effective September 2024
Behaviour Resource Class (BRC)			x	Two BRC classes were closed: Chris Hadfield and Rolling Meadows
Kindergarten Expressive Language and Literacy Program (KELLP) and Expressive Language and Literacy (ELPHA)	x	x		1 ELPHA class moved from Boich to Sir Ernest McMillan PS 1 ELPHA class opened at Hawthorne Village PS
Communication			x	2 classes closed at Makwendam and Bruce Trail PS
Community Pathways Program (CPP)		x		Growth in the Elsie McGill SS program (Year 3); additional sections provided

Structured Learning Class (pilot)			x	Closed the three classes: Heritage Glen, Martin Street and Alexander's Public Schools
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4.2 Association Reports

J. Legare from Autism Ontario provided the following update:

Live Moderated Webinar Panel: Exploring and Engaging Autistic People's Experiences with Applied Behaviour Analysis; October 17, 2023, 12:00 - 1:30 PM; <https://bit.ly/45Oy8o6>

This presentation is brought to you by Brock University and Western University. To move forward as a field comprised of people who value ethics, progress, and neurodiversity-affirming practices, applied behaviour analysis (ABA) researchers and practitioners should listen to the experiences and perspectives of the community to meaningfully support Autistic people. This virtual panel is situated within a larger ABA initiative focused on improving the practice of ABA. This synchronous virtual event will allow participants the opportunity to engage with panel members. The goal is for participants to understand a sample of current ABA sentiments and ideas for progress.

The Journey to Adulthood Discussion Workshop (for parents and caregivers of autistic youth ages 16-20). Wednesdays, October 25 - December 6, 2023. 7:00 – 8:30 PM. <https://www.autismontario.com/civicrm/event/info?id=8966> (Registration opens October 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM)

The Journey to Adulthood Discussion Workshop is a virtual workshop open to parents and caregivers province-wide. It is a series of six discussions featuring topics relevant to the transition from youth to adulthood. Each session includes discussion and resources around specific topics on the journey to adulthood. **Registration is limited, opens October 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

Autism Ontario Presents: Exploring Autism

October 26th, 12-1 pm <https://bit.ly/3PbZgqh>

This webinar aims to introduce autism and neurodiversity. We will discuss autism and neurodiversity, the features of autism, and provide information on how autistic people may perceive and interact with their environment. We will also discuss how you can be an autistic ally, offering practical tips and strategies on how to create an inclusive environment and support autistic people in your home, school, or community. At the end of the webinar, participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and participate in a live Q&A session with a member of the Autism Ontario team.

Chair Brindle from Centre for Diverse Learners-Halton shared the following:

This month there will be three workshops focusing on post secondary opportunities. For those interested in attending, further details can be accessed on the CDL [website](#). Topics include: entrance to University, College and the Trades.

4.3 Trustee's Report

Trustee Baxter announced that the Board is currently in the process of formulating the forthcoming multi-year strategic plan. The existing plan is set to span until 2024, and this year significant efforts will be dedicated to fostering engagement. Moreover, there will be an open invitation for community involvement, especially aimed at shaping the future direction of the board for the upcoming four years. Stay tuned for further updates and developments.

4.4 Committee Reports

- Mental Health and Support Well-being Committee – the meeting dates have been received, but the connection information is still required

5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

- November - Presentation from ABC;
- December - Blind and Low Vision team will present their approach to supporting students who benefit from their services
- December - Student Well Being Department presentation on the results of their service impact survey

Chair Brindle invited members to suggest any specific agenda items for the upcoming meetings.

Interest in assistive technology presentation, as well as a presentation on bullying, focusing on the implementation of programming and support for students facing a high risk of stigmatization.

6.0 Adjournment

6.1 Chair Brindle adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.