



Halton District School Board

HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee

Garth Webb Secondary School – Resource Room

Monday March 6, 2017, 7pm

MINUTES

Present: Denise Nacev, **Chair** (Member-at-Large); Amy Collard (Trustee Alternate); Jason Bartlett, (Member-at-Large); Leah Reynolds (Trustee Representative); Dawn Spence (Association for Bright Children); Tammy Beattie (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Kim Graves (Trustee Representative); Mike Brown (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Ontario); Lucille Morris (Member-at-Large);

Staff: Mark Zonneveld (Superintendent); Jane Lewis (Principal of Special Education); Margaret Kew (Vice-Principal of Special Education); Rebecca Bardin (SEAC Assistant)

Trustees: Jeanne Gray, Tracey Ehl Harrison

Regrets: Carla Marshall (Autism Ontario); Sherry Foster (Association for Bright Children); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Richelle Papin (Trustee Alternate); Diane Vandebossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton);

Absent: Keren Mack (Autism Ontario)

1.0 **Opening**

1.1. Welcome and Call to Order

D. Nacev called the meeting to order at **7:05** p.m.

D. Nacev welcomed Melissa Dockeray who has joined SEAC to represent the Easter Seals Association.

1.2. Approval of Agenda

#71-17 L. Morris/J. Bartlett

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda for March 6, 2017.

Carried Unanimously

2.0 **Call for Notices of Motion/Reports to the Board**

None.

3.0 **Action**

3.1. Minutes of February 7, 2017 meeting

#72-17 L. Morris/T. Beattie

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for February 7, 2017 be approved as amended.

Carried Unanimously

3.2. Presentation/Discussion Sped Ed Review Findings

D. Nacev presented the highlights and key findings of the Special Education Review. This data was compiled by Arnold Love and Paul Favro, Special Education Review Consultants.

Discussion ensued amongst the members surrounding an understanding of the exceptionalities, non-identified/other exceptionalities and the data brought forward. Questions, suggestions and hypotheses were discussed as to why the data may or may not portray specific information.

M. Zonneveld responded that the data is very new and many questions are being raised. The steering committee has brought forward the question of the make-up of the non-identified and knowing more about who these students are.

J. Gray would like to know if this data has been gathered in the past and if so, is HDSB trending in a positive way?

M. Zonneveld responded that data to this extent has not previously been gathered and therefore, there is not a baseline to refer back to.

T. Beattie would like to know if a comparison was made between the students' survey responses and the parents' survey responses. Some findings are opposite of the perceptions.

M. Zonneveld responded that these are great questions. This data is very new and will be reviewed and analyzed further. There is a high level of correlation in the data.

T. Beattie stated: LDAH is concerned that the number of students identified with Learning Disabilities decreased as non-identified increased. Why the increase for not identifying? We have been told in previous SEAC meetings that majority of students that are not identified fit the learning disabilities profile. We are concerned that the actual number of children with Learning Disabilities not meeting the academic requirements is higher and not being accurately captured.

SEAC has been told that the schools are meeting the needs of students with Non-Identified IEPs. The data collected showed that student achievement in elementary was lowest among Non-Identified (IEP) in reading, writing, and number sense and numeration. This creates concern that we are not meeting the needs of these students, regardless of their learning profile.

M. Zonneveld requested SEAC to forward any questions and details that they would like to share. Any feedback is welcomed so that the data can be reviewed and analyzed further with SEAC's contribution.

M. Zonneveld confirmed that this presentation will be shared with Trustees. These findings have also been shared with staff to review. Recommendations have not yet been discussed or brought forward.

3.3. Budget Considerations

M. Zonneveld mentioned that initially it was anticipated that the review would help guide the budget process but unfortunately, the review is not at a stage that it can provide data to assist at this time in budget discussions.

M. Zonneveld discussed changes coming forward that will be affecting budget decisions. During the provincial negotiations, unions negotiated 4% compensation increase along with an increase to Special Education staffing.

At this time, the Board is unaware of the final funding amount that will be granted by the province to HDSB to cover these costs. Due to these circumstances, the Board has chosen to hold off any budget discussions or decisions until this is finalized.

As it currently stands, HDSB Special Education is required to continue with a \$2 million reduction for the 2017/2018 school year and has an outstanding carryover of approximately \$1 million in reductions from the 2016/2017 school year. M. Zonneveld reported that the Board is waiting to see if the provincial funding amount will offset the current phase of reductions encountered from the GSN?

J. Bartlett questioned if the budget approval will continue to have the same timelines and be compressed because of the delay in details from the province?

M. Zonneveld responded that timelines will remain the same and additional SEAC meetings may be scheduled as information is available.

4.0 Questions from the Public

None.

5.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period

D. Nacev provided SEAC with an update on this year's Special Education Track Meet and mentioned that it is the 30th anniversary of the meet. The Optimist Club will be providing and serving the food. The meet will take place at Garth Webb Secondary School, Oakville on June 16th. The rain date is set for June 21st.

T. Beattie announced that the pro grant is opening for applications.

The following questions were brought forward by HDSA. M. Zonneveld and J. Lewis addressed questions where applicable. Further review/clarification may be required and could be discussed directly with M. Zonneveld.

- 1) Could we please have a progress report on the EA Allocation Process Review recommendations? Are any of the recommendations being implemented as part of the EA allocation process that is happening now?

M. Brown would like to know how the parent voice is being addressed.

M. Zonneveld responded that this is being incorporated through school communication strategies.

- 2) We've heard from families that they are accessing CCAC services (OT) in kindergarten. Has there been a change to how CCAC services are accessed? (Students used to have to wait until grade 1 to apply).

M. Zonneveld Responded that the process for accessing CCAC services has not changed.

- 3) Our association has concerns over the name given to the “Employability Skills Certificate”. It brings to mind a time when our families were told that their kids were “unteachable”. Could this name be changed to “Employment Skills Certificate”?
M. Zonneveld responded that staff are considering a name change for this certificate program. Any proposed change will be shared with SEAC, and will include an opportunity for feedback.

- 4) Parents considering a Life Skills placement are still being told that they are not allowed to see the exact class that their student would go to. As stated in the Special Education Plan, and as discussed at SEAC for many years, parents are allowed to see the recommended class before making a decision. Can a message be sent out to all principals and SERTs to clear this up?
J. Lewis responded that this was discussed with IPLS and they could not come up with an instance that a location visit could not be accommodated. This would be very rare circumstances if this was to occur.

- 5) HDSA would like to follow up on getting real money for use in Life Skills and CPP classes. Last year (Sept/15) we asked about this and were told there was a possibility. Many Life Skills and CPP classes go to the grocery store on a regular basis to buy the food that they will cook with. Instead of having kids handle real money, schools have accounts with grocery stores and the transacting is done by the teacher who has to sign for it. Managing real money is a key skill that is on the IEPs of many students in these classes. Students need practice with money in real life situations. Especially for high school students who will be out in the world in a few years, learning to handle money is a fundamental skill that they are going to need. Has there been any progress made in getting real cash to teachers in these classes so they can be properly equipped to teach money skills to their students?
M. Zonneveld responded that this question was raised last year and staff inquired again with Business Services about options. Staff are not able to use real money in these situations. Students will be given ample opportunities to learn how to handle money in Life Skills and CPP classes.

- 6) We have heard of an email that went out to all schools telling staff not to open or close vehicle doors, unbuckle seat belts, or help students into or out of their vehicles, as these things pose a safety risk for staff. The drivers are supposed to stay in their seats. Could you please give us details about this email and explain who is helping the students who need help?
M. Zonneveld responded that students who require assistance to enter and exit vehicles will continue to be supported by staff.

- 7) Can SEAC have a copy of the IPRC Waiver letter that is going out to families?
M. Zonneveld responded that this document has been added to the 2017 Special Education Plan.

6.0 Communication to SEAC

6.1. Superintendent's Report – March 2017

SEAC Superintendent's Report - Mar. 6, 2017

1. White Oaks SS Community Pathways Program (CPP) Expansion
Oakville students currently on the Employability Skills Certificate (ESC) pathway attend the CPP at White Oaks SS, while students on the Community Skills Certificate (CSC) pathway attend TA Blakelock SS. With enrolment continuing to rise, and in line with the recommendations from the Life Skills Review, the CPP at White Oaks will be expanded to include ESC and CSC pathways effective Sept 2017. Staff are in the process of determining the boundaries for CPP for both schools. Staff are also looking into expanding the CPP at TA Blakelock to include the ESC pathway in the near future.
2. Self-Contained Classes for 2017-18
Staff are tracking students coming through SRT and IPRC to determine the need for self-contained classes in September throughout the system. Classes that open, close or move will be determined as quickly as possible with schools and parents informed and appropriate transition plans developed and implemented. SEAC will be informed of these changes as they are finalized.
3. Trauma Sensitive Schools Training
Training was provided last week for schools across the board in Trauma Sensitive Schools. There has been great demand for this as schools become more aware of students with this background and the value of the training. Further training opportunities are being offered during staff meetings, lunch and learns, and on PA Days.
4. March Break Assistive Technology Camps
AT Camps are being offered at Robert Bateman HS during March Break. Four half day camps are running for students in grades 2-8.
5. Building Our Foundation Conference
This year Mental Health and Safe Schools are joining forces in hosting the Building Our Foundation Conference on Friday, April 7 at the Oakville Convention Centre. Our guest speaker this year is Dr. Bruce Ferguson and SEAC members are welcome to join us to hear Bruce from 8:30–10:00. Please let Rebecca know if you plan to attend.

6.2 Association Reports

LDAH – T. Beattie

- Reading Rocks just finished an 8-week session. All students showed improvements in the 3 targeted areas - sight words, PA/phonics and Fluency. Next session begins the first week in April. We are always looking for students and volunteers. Contact Katie at LDAH.
- Remedial instruction is well into their second half of season. There are only 1 or 2 slots available.
- Conference registration is higher than previous years. We are close to a full house. Early bird rates end this Friday.
- Parent's Lecture Series continues to be popular. Parents have requested more information about IEPs and YRDSB waterfall chart, so we are planning on a couple of

coffee chats - March 9 and April 8. These will be at our Resource Centre - check website for info.

- Next lecture is in Milton on March 29th, Executive Functioning Strategies.

6.3. Trustee Reports

K. Graves

- Delegation bylaw was passed – timelines will be more forgiving and more time frame for Questions and Answers
- PAR is ongoing – public meeting tomorrow at New Street Ed. Centre at 7pm
- L. Reynolds mentioned that an online survey that was sent out and will be available at the community PAR meeting tomorrow.

6.4. Committees and Other Reports

PIC – D. Spence

Planning meeting in January and February with the school based representatives. PIC Conference is October – key note speakers TBA

Equity and Inclusive Education Steering Advisory Committee – D. Vandebossche
Report to SEAC March, 2017

The EIESAC meeting was held February 6, 2017 at the Halton Welcome Centre in Milton. The guest speaker was one of our own vice-principals talking about her disability. She has developed a disorder in adulthood that is deteriorating her hearing slowly over time. As she had already developed a good strong vocabulary with excellent speech patterns, her hearing loss is actually invisible. At this time, she has hearing aids and does need the support of an fm system when in meetings. She also needs her students, parents, and colleagues to ensure that they are facing her when speaking.

At this time, she does not sign but is considering the role this may play in her future. She is also facing surgery or complete hearing loss.

D. Vandebossche looks forward to more speakers and discussions in the future regarding the Ability Lens.

7.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

- agenda item - additional feedback on the Special Education Review
- budget information will be provide at the next meeting if available

8.0 Adjournment

8.3. Motion to Adjourn

#73-17 L. Reynolds/T. Beattie

“THAT the meeting be adjourned.”

Carried Unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm