

PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee of the Peel District School Board, held in the Brampton Room, the H. J. A. Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga, Ontario on Wednesday, September 30, 2015 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada, Chair
Carrie Andrews, Trustee
Nokha Dakroub, Trustee
Karen Kennedy, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter (19:05)
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario
Brad MacDonald, Trustee
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for the Visually Impaired (19:30)
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter (19:10)
Fauzia Reza, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

Absent: (apologies received*)

Nancy Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch
Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Vice-Chair*

Also present:

Kaustav Chaudhuri, Student Trustee South
Karen Del Ben, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel
Cheri Hearty, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region (Alternate)
Arunoshi Singh, Student Trustee North

Administration:

Shirley-Ann Teal, Acting Superintendent of Education (Executive Member)
Ted Byers, Superintendent of Education
Pertia Minott, Superintendent of Education
Scott Moreash, Associate Director of Instructional Support Services

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

SE-49, moved by Carol Oitment, that the agenda, be approved.

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Acting Superintendent of Education, Shirley-Ann Teal, announced that effective October 13, 2015, Ted Byers, will take over as Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, and Pertia Minott, Superintendent of Education, will take charge of system leadership in Mental Health, and act as Executive Backup Member for SEAC. She advised that Ted Byers will work closely with Superintendent of Education for Early Years, Wendy Dowling, who has done significant work with early childhood educators, educational resource facilitators and teaching assistants, and they will review children's needs, teaching strategies, and partnerships.

Shirley-Ann Teal also introduced Tracy Bardell and Sharon Cook who have been appointed as Special Education Coordinators for elementary and secondary panels, respectively. An organization chart of special education department staff was circulated along with a list of special education acronyms, copies of the Peel DSB Directory, and Directions book. A letter and certificate received from the Minister of Education, Liz Sandals, on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of Bill 82, The Education Amendment Act, 1980, was circulated. Bill 82 granted that all children, regardless of disabilities, be provided with the opportunity for a publicly funded education. The certificate acknowledges the exemplary commitment of the Peel DSB's Special Education Advisory Committee to improving programs and services for students with special education needs.

2. Special Presentation – Starting Point 2015

The Starting Point 2015 video 'You Inspire' was shown.

3. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, June 16, 2015

SE-50, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of June 16, 2015, be approved.

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5. Peel Region Special Needs Strategy – Integrated Rehab Planning Table

Lorie Grant, Chief Speech and Language Pathologist, and Ana Pauchulo, Coordinating Principal for Special Needs, who are members of the Peel Integrated Rehab Planning Table, circulated handouts outlining the work done to date and a service delivery diagram. Lorie Grant recalled the goals of the Special Needs Strategy. She advised that pre-school programs, Community Care Access Centres and partner agencies were asked to work together to develop proposals for integrated service, and that changes and funding would be considered by the Ministry. Lorie Grant stated that discussions were held between service providers to identify one agency to facilitate seamless service, and care would be delivered in a school setting for school-aged children, with the focus on optimizing child and youth outcomes.

Ana Pauchulo and Lorie Grant reviewed a slide showing the proposed Service Delivery diagram, which includes: involving communities and raising awareness; intake coordinated by Peel Intake Network; determination of need; assessment, service planning; intervention; transitions and discharge. Ana Pauchulo advised that the details of the proposal will be worked out regarding implementation. She explained how the intake will be a simplified process of sharing information on a network database, designed to avoid repetition of intake processes at each service provider, and a determination will be made depending on single service or complex needs of the individual. Lorie Grant stated that the assessment will be done in conjunction with the family, and services will flow from birth to end of school. She commented that directors of agencies are expected to review and provide feedback on the proposals by October 15, 2015, submissions to the Ministry are due by October 30, 2015, and names of service providers will be disclosed once the proposal has been approved by the Ministry. Lorie Grant referred to the information in the report outlining community engagement, work in progress, processes ahead, and membership.

Special Education staff responded to questions of clarification from a member with regard to eliminating waitlists. The member expressed concern about the number of individuals entering the system and queried whether the proposed service model will assist in avoiding bottlenecks and ease frustration for parents, in the absence of additional funding to cope with growth. The member also asked about sharing details of the proposal with SEAC.

SE-51, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the report re Peel Region Special Needs Strategy – Integrated Rehab Planning Table, be received.

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6. Draft SEAC Annual Calendar 2015-2016 – Agenda and Goals

Chair Byers stated that the Draft SEAC Annual Calendar is a work in progress. She expressed a need for organizations to present at SEAC meetings to keep members up to date about any concerns or what SEAC needs to do to assist them. She invited member organizations to contact her by email and suggested that members refer to the annual calendar online, posted on the Parent Associations Advisory Committee's PAAC on SEAC website, for ideas.

6. Draft SEAC Annual Calendar 2015-2016 – Agenda and Goals (Continued)

Shirley-Ann Teal reviewed the report and amended the activity for October to, Develop plan for review 2015-2016 Special Education Report. The following items were suggested by members for inclusion in the calendar: Easter Seals Ontario - Best Practices Report; Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Plan Review; Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region (LDAPR) Presentation; Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) Update; Individual Education Plan (IEP) Update.

SE-52, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that Draft SEAC Annual Calendar 2015-2016 – Agenda and Goals, be received.

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7. Terms of Reference – Special Education Advisory Committee 2015-2016

Chair Byers advised that some SEAC members had met on September 11, 2015, to discuss revisions to the Terms of Reference. Shirley-Ann Teal thanked the members who worked on the Terms of Reference, for their input. She noted that SEAC is a legislated Committee of the Board, and trustee members of SEAC need to be involved and included in the informal discussions.

The proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference indicated in the report, were reviewed. Shirley-Ann Teal spoke of the Board's commitment to inclusivity and acknowledgement of religious observances of the community. She noted that this may result in scheduling some SEAC meetings on days other than the third Tuesday of the month. Some members expressed support for the Board's policy of recognizing the diverse community in Peel and working towards increased community involvement. Chair Byers commented that the revised schedule does not suit some SEAC members and expressed the opinion that further discussion on the topic is needed.

Shirley-Ann Teal spoke about the proposed revision regarding the format of the meeting and delivery of the agenda 72 hours prior to the meeting. She indicated that in case the agenda contains large documents, Superintendent Ted Byers can work with members to circulate such documents earlier. Regarding the request for a summary of action items to be included in the minutes, Shirley-Ann Teal explained that the SEAC minutes are prepared in accordance with the Board format and consistent with the minutes of other Committees of the Board. She commended the idea of having a summary report and proposed that following each SEAC meeting, Superintendent Ted Byers, along with special education staff, and SEAC members, prepare a chart which can be shared with members through the Chair and Vice-Chair of SEAC. Further questions of clarification were responded to regarding: whether the minutes can be called a report; requirements under Regulation 464/97.

SE-53, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the draft revised Terms of Reference – Special Education Advisory Committee 2015-2016, be brought back to the next SEAC meeting for further discussion, before it is recommended to the Board for approval.

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8. Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List

Members reviewed the list. Contact information for Wes McDonald and Cheri Hearty will be updated.

SE-54, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List, as amended, be received.

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9. Revised Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016

SE-55, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the revised Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016, be received.

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10. Special Education Audit

Shirley-Ann Teal provided background information regarding the Regional Internal Audit Team's work, reviewing the efficiency of different areas of government services. She referred to the report and advised that the overall objective of this audit was to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of special education programs and services. No significant issues were found. She noted that overall funding from the Ministry for special education was not reviewed. Shirley-Ann Teal indicated that this report was presented at the Board's Audit Committee meeting held yesterday, when the auditor remarked that Peel DSB is doing extremely well in spite of challenges.

Responding to a member's question about the sample number of students used for the audit, Shirley-Ann Teal clarified that although the number of students were not identified in the report, the auditors reviewed all exceptionalities and considered samples from each.

SE-56, moved by Brad MacDonald, that the report re Special Education Audit, be received.

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11. Intensive Support Classes – Centennial Senior Public School and Meadowvale Village Public School

Background information on the proposal for Intensive Support classes at Centennial Senior Public School and Meadowvale Village Public School was reviewed. Merryl Nash, Coordinator of Behaviour Programs, advised that the Intensive Support (IS) class has a special education teacher and two behaviour teaching assistants (BTAs). She advised that students in an IS class may have complex emotional and/or behavioural needs and that a social worker, psychologist, and speech-language pathologist are also allocated to the class. She described the program as highly structured, which includes weekly meetings to problem-solve and update parents.

11. Intensive Support Classes – Centennial Senior Public School and Meadowvale Village Public School (Continued)

In response to a member's query as to whether one teacher and two BTAs are adequate for 6-8 high-needs students in a class, Merryl Nash explained that special education teachers are experienced professionals and with the support of parents can build relationships, and set structures for students, to achieve positive results.

SE-57, moved by Jennifer Knight, that the report re Intensive Support Classes – Centennial Senior Public School and Meadowvale Village Public School, be received.

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12. Special Education Plan Checklist

Shirley-Ann Teal reviewed the Special Education Plan Checklist 2014-2015 for the Peel District School Board which was submitted to the Ministry for annual review in June 2015. The Checklist is used to report on the provision of special education programs and services provided during the previous school year and to provide a description of any variance, as necessary.

SE-58, moved by Carrie Andrews, that the report re Special Education Plan Checklist, be received.

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13. Communications

Acting Superintendent Teal noted that Item 13.6 includes a letter from Wellington CDSB regarding Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices.

SE-59, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the following communications, be received:

1. Letter to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair, Near North District School Board re Learning for All
2. Letter to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair, Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB re Regulation 274
3. Letter to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair, Peel District School Board re Regulation 274
4. Letter to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair, Durham District School Board re Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices
5. Letter from Minister Liz Sandals to SEAC Chair, Peel District School Board re Teacher Hiring Practices
6. Letters to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair, Wellington CDSB re Needs of Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices
7. Letter to Minister Liz Sandals from SEAC Vice-Chair, Upper Canada District School Board re Special Education Funding

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14. Question Period

Carol Ogilvie reported on a Community Planning and Partnerships review and inquired about the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline consultations. She asked about input from SEAC and noted that the deadline of September 30, 2015 for submission. Carol Ogilvie will provide Shirley-Ann Teal with a copy of the document for follow-up.

Carol Ogilvie inquired about how the Board is dealing with the new role of the Ombudsman's office. Associate Director of Instructional Support Services, Scott Moreash, reported that the role of the Ontario Ombudsman was recently expanded to include educational issues in the province. He advised that Peel DSB was asked to examine whether the Board has an internal process to assist community members to resolve issues with the Board. Scott Moreash stated that Peel DSB has an operating procedure, endorsed by the Board, which explains the procedure for finding a resolution through a teacher, principal/vice-principal, and superintendent of education. He stated that if the issue cannot be resolved, the Ombudsman's office communicates with the Director of Education and the issue is dealt with by Director's Office and appropriate staff.

Carol Ogilvie commented that a revised document on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM5), posted online by the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, has posed some confusion. She mentioned that October is Learning Disabilities Awareness Month and circulated flyers providing information on programs and services.

Carol Ogilvie mentioned that usually a letter from the Superintendent of Special Education Support Services is sent to SEAC members at the beginning of the school year, inviting input and information, however, this year she has not received any communication. Shirley-Ann Teal indicated that a response will be brought back.

15. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

16. Adjournment

SE-60, moved by Mary Wright, that the meeting adjourn (20:50 hours).

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