

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 Tuesday, December 16, 2014 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

Carrie Andrews, Trustee
Nancy Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association
Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter
Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario
Nancy Leaton, Autism Ontario Peel Chapter
Brad MacDonald, Trustee
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for Blind and Visually Impaired Children
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada – Peel Chapter
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

Absent: (apologies received)

Nokha Dakroub, Trustee*

Also present:

Tammy Bowman, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel
Fauzia Reza, Autism Ontario Peel Chapter (Alternate)

Administration:

Louise Sirisko, Superintendent, Special Education Support Services (Executive Member)
Joy Uniac, Superintendent of Education (Executive Backup Member)
Scott Moreash, Associate Director, Instructional Support Services
Tony Ronca, Internal Auditor

Marina Amin, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Louise Sirisko, assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order. She welcomed newly elected trustee members, Carrie Andrews, and Nokha Dakroub who had conveyed her regrets for this meeting. Louise Sirisko also noted the addition of a new alternate member, Abeer Zuberi, representing Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids.

1. Approval of Agenda (Continued)

SE-01, moved by Brad MacDonald, that the agenda be approved.

..... carried

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Superintendent Sirisko noted that this is the first SEAC meeting since the Organizational and Second Meetings of the Board. In keeping with Board by-laws relating to the election of the SEAC Chair and Vice-Chair, Louise Sirisko called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Carol Oitment nominated Barbara Byers.

There were no further nominations. After observing the standard one minute silence, Barbara Byers was acclaimed Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee for 2014 - 2015.

Superintendent Sirisko called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Barbara Cyr nominated Shelley Foster
Carrie Andrews nominated Brad MacDonald

There were no further nominations. After having observed the standard one minute's silence, Committee members voted to elect the Vice-Chair of SEAC, with Internal Auditor, Tony Ronca, acting as scrutineer. Following the voting, Superintendent Sirisko declared Shelley Foster as Vice-Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee for 2014 - 2015.

Chair Byers assumed the Chair.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, November 18, 2014

Carol Oitment indicated that she had conveyed her regrets for the last meeting.

SE-02, moved by Nancy Leaton, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, held November 18, 2014, be approved.

..... carried

5. Ontario Special Needs Strategy

Lorie Grant, Chief Speech Language Pathologist, stated that the Ontario Special Needs Strategy places the needs of children and youth at the centre of all policy, program and service delivery decisions, and outlines how these services will be provided to special needs children right from birth to the end of their schooling.

Providing an historical overview of the earlier service delivery model, Lorie Grant noted that the Special Needs Strategy was developed to integrate Rehab services such as Speech-language pathology, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy, and to coordinate the services of Rehabilitation, Nursing, Personal Support Autism, Respite, Developmental, Mental Health, and Health and Education, to make them easily accessible to special needs children and youth. With a PowerPoint presentation she highlighted the challenges faced by families seeking special needs services, including: inability to access consolidated services for children with both speech and language needs; lengthy wait times for receiving assessments and interventions; incomplete or inconsistent range of service interventions delivered by different service provider organizations; administrative service gaps resulting in uncoordinated service for children with multiple needs and those transitioning from pre-school to school-aged services. As a result, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, engaged Deloitte LLP to audit the speech and language services delivery model. Lorie Grant outlined findings of the audit, which included: when working outside existing mandates, local service delivery partners can develop effective service delivery practices to better meet local needs; all demonstration sites showed improvements in access, quality and value; there were no appreciable differences in access, quality and value with respect to the severity of the student's speech and language needs; school boards had the shortest wait times and higher proportions of children achieving their goals; children waited longer for one-on-one intervention; parents preferred speech and language services to be delivered in schools; service delivery in-school enables a broader range of intervention types.

Speaking of next steps, Lorie Grant stated that the goal is to connect children and youth to the services they need as quickly as possible, and to improve the service experience for families in three key areas: Developmental Screen; Coordinated Service Planning; Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services. She described service delivery, action plan, and implementation process for each of these three key areas. Advising that no additional funding will be provided to deliver rehabilitation services at this time, Lorie Grant stated that the Ministries are open to the realignment of funds to support a seamless service delivery, and that funding needs to be managed appropriately. She advised members about the resources that are available on the Ministry's website, and stated that she will email a copy of the PowerPoint presentation to all SEAC members. SEAC members were asked to consider ways to engage families and youth in discussion on the Special Needs Strategy, and a questionnaire will be provided to facilitate these discussions with the community.

Questions of clarification and suggestions from members, included: steps to be taken to reduce wait times for assessments and delivery of services; rationale for not including Infant Hearing Program in the agency listing; need to develop a plan to address the challenges faced by parents, in the absence of additional funding; the appropriate type of service required at the right time, and the degree of service.

5. Ontario Special Needs Strategy (Continued)

SE-03, moved by Jennifer Knight, that the report re Ontario Special Needs Strategy, be received.

..... carried

6. Communications

SE-04, moved by Carol Oitment, that the following communications, be received:

1. Letter from Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board regarding issues with Regulation 274
2. Letter from the Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee regarding results from the 2014 SEAC Survey
3. Community Living Ontario regarding 6th Annual Commence Conference, February 11 - 12, 2015 in Toronto

.....

Highlighting Item 6.1, Letter from Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB on concerns related to Regulation 274, Superintendent Sirisko conveyed the Chair of the Board's request that these concerns be discussed further by SEAC members. She indicated that issues resulting from Regulation 274, which relate to teacher hiring, has impacted students. Louise Sirisko further stated that the Regulation dictates the hiring of teachers based solely on seniority, and has become a lengthy and delayed process. Superintendent Sirisko invited SEAC members to support the concerns expressed about Regulation 274, and join in the campaign to ask for change at the provincial level. She indicated that the Board's Human Resources department would be pleased to offer an information session on Regulation 274, to provide members with a clearer understanding of the Regulation.

Referring to Item 6.2, Letter from Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee regarding results from the 2014 SEAC Survey, Superintendent Sirisko noted that the survey summary can be used as a source of information for mentoring new members at the table, effecting changes and gaining fresh ideas and insights.

.....

SE-04

..... carried

7. Question Period

Ann Smith spoke about Community Living Ontario's 6th Annual Commence Conference to be held on February 11 and 12, 2015 in Toronto, and suggested that members attend this conference.

Carol Ogilvie reported on discussions at a recent Accessibility Committee meeting in regard to bringing awareness of the various disabilities that exist, and sharing the information with schools.

8. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

9. Adjournment

SE-05, moved by Mary Wright, that the meeting adjourn (20:00 hours).

..... carried