

## 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 Monday, December 19, 2016 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

Nancy Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch  
Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada  
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter  
Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children  
David Green, Trustee  
Sue Lawton, Trustee  
Nancy Leaton, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter  
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for the Visually Impaired  
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region  
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario  
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living (19:25)  
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

Members absent (apologies received marked \*):

Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario \*  
Suzanne Nurse, Trustee \*  
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter

Administration:

Ted Byers, Superintendent of Special Education Support Services (Executive Member)  
Scott Moreash, Associate Director of Instructional Support Services

Nicole Fernandes, Board Reporter

### 1. Approval of Agenda

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Ted Byers, assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order. He welcomed returning trustee members, David Green and Sue Lawton, and reported that Suzanne Nurse is the newly elected trustee member on SEAC.

SE-01, moved by Nancy Leaton, that the agenda, be approved.

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**2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Superintendent Byers noted that this is the first SEAC meeting since the Organizational and Second Meetings of the Board. He reviewed Board by-laws relating to the election of Chair and Vice-Chair, and he reported that Scott Moreash, Associate Director of Instructional Support Services, will act as scrutineer in the event of a vote by secret ballot. Ted Byers called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Carol Ogilvie nominated Shelley Foster.

There were no further nominations. After observing the standard one minute silence, Superintendent Byers declared Shelley Foster as Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee for 2016 - 2017. He thanked Barbara Byers for her contributions to SEAC as Chair of the Committee for the past 10 years.

Shelley Foster assumed the Chair and she called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

Barbara Cyr nominated Sue Lawton.

There were no further nominations. After having observed the standard one minute silence, Chair Foster declared Sue Lawton elected as Vice-Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee for 2016 - 2017.

**3. Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**4. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, November 15, 2016**

SE-02, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of November 15, 2016, be approved.

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**5. Superintendent's Report**

Providing an oral update report, Superintendent Byers highlighted the Sunrise Seminar held on November 17, 2016, conducted by Special Education staff for principals and vice-principals, to provide information and respond to questions on special education programs and services. Attendees could participate in person or via live stream. He thanked staff for their work on the Seminar and noted that the information is archived. Referring to the Board-wide Professional Development day on November 18, 2016, Ted Byers spoke about workshops and break-out sessions for staff from vocational programs and from the Gifted program, as well as for special education staff from Parkholme and Applewood Schools and T.L. Kennedy Secondary School. The workshops provided an opportunity for staff to ask questions, and share learning and effective practices.

**5. Superintendent's Report (Continued)**

Superintendent Byers reported that he attended a session regarding the Renewed Math Strategy, when teams from secondary schools were brought together with a focus on improving mathematics achievement at the secondary school level. Teams included special education heads from each school, and the session is the first of three such sessions to be held during the year. In response to members' questions of clarification, Superintendent Byers confirmed the declining trend in mathematics scores and the focus of the Ministry on the Renewed Math Strategy. He advised that there has been no change to the mathematics curriculum, and that a report on EngageMath will be brought to SEAC in 2017.

Ted Byers congratulated Ana Pauchulo, Coordinating Principal, Special Needs, who received the 2016 Educational Leader of the Year Award, presented to her by the Ontario Council for Exceptional Children at its Annual Special Education Conference held on December 1, 2016 in Toronto.

SE-03, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the Superintendent's Report (oral), be received.

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**6. Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List**

SE-04, moved by Carol Oitment, that the Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List, be received.

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**7. October Report Data**

Superintendent Byers reported that key enrolment data is provided to the Ministry in October and March each year. October data is verified in February and, as a result, data contained in the above-referred report is not verified.

Reviewing the table and graphs, Ted Byers explained that the report provides data over the past ten years. He highlighted that this is the first year that the number of non-identified students is higher than the number of identified students, and he outlined some of the reasons for this growth. Confirming that special education funding is based on needs of identified and non-identified students, he noted that the total number of special education students, identified and non-identified, was 23,275, and that this number has been fairly steady over the past five years. Superintendent Byers then reviewed the graphs showing the numbers and trends for each exceptionality.

(Continued overleaf)

**7. October Report Data (Continued)**

The administration responded to members' questions of clarification or comments. A member remarked that the number of identified Gifted students is 1% of the Peel student population, and that there is a 42% decline in the number of identified Gifted students. The member then stated that parents have been expressing disappointment that students' entry into the Gifted program is delayed until Grade 6. A lengthy discussion ensued following another member's report on parents' feedback that students entering the system with a Mild Intellectual Disability (MID) diagnosis are later placed in classes with the Developmental Disability (DD) exceptionality. Commenting that DD students are being streamed into life skills courses, she asked as to what programs and services are available for students with MID exceptionality to help avoid a subsequent DD diagnosis, and she stated that parents would like to know about courses relating to the academic achievement of the students. The administration clarified that based on their profiles, students with MID are supported either in mainstream courses or through GLD, and their core program is based on the Ontario curriculum. Methods teachers may use to link life skills with mathematics and literacy learning were explained, and the difficulty in desegregating data with regard to students who start out with the MID exceptionality and then progress to DD was noted.

Members requested additional information regarding: breakdown of the number of deaf/hard of hearing students receiving services either through Special Equipment Amount (SEA) or technical support; programs and services, and the duration, for students with multiple exceptionalities, and whether refugee status students are in special education programs; Board resource that provides information on each of the 13 exceptionalities, programs and services for each exceptionality, as well as stakeholders, and the roles and responsibilities of Special Education department and school staff with regard to each exceptionality; October data broken down by elementary and secondary and male and female data.

SE-05, moved by Wes MacDonald, that the information re October Report Data, be received.

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**8. Special Education Plan Development – Section C: Service Delivery Models by Exceptionality – Language Impairment**

Superintendent Byers stated that the report provides information on criteria that is considered in identifying a student with the exceptionality of Language Impairment (LI), and the kinds of programs and services that will flow from the identification. Special Education Coordinator, Nora Green, reviewed the graph showing the pathways for elementary students identified with Language Impairment exceptionality. She read the Ministry definition of Language Impairment, and outlined the programs and supports received by the students. She highlighted the annual review and update of the placement based on strengths and needs.

**8. Special Education Plan Development – Section C: Service Delivery Models by Exceptionality – Language Impairment (Continued)**

Superintendent Byers reported on the pathways for secondary school students with a Language Impairment identification, and provided information on Learning Strategies I and II, and Vocational 1 and 2 programs. In response to a member's question, he confirmed that a course credit is received by a student attending a GLE class in secondary school, but the credit will not count as a University level course. In response to Chair Foster's suggestion that more information on Language Impairment be provided through a presentation, Chief Psychologist, Jack Kamrad, advised that there is no typical pathway with regard to manifestation of a Language Impairment identification. The Ministry definition is not sufficient to guide operational definitions and provide staff with a consistent way to develop the student's profile, but students with a Language Impairment identification demonstrate a low education level and are clearly facing challenges with their education.

SE-06, moved by Mary Wright, that the report re Special Education Plan Development – Section C: Service Delivery Models by Exceptionality – Language Impairment, be received.

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**9. Question Period**

Carol Ogilvie referred to the online EQAO testing pilot, and she asked whether students who use assistive technology were able to take the online tests. Superintendent Byers reported that the online EQAO testing was not completed successfully, and the OSSLT in April 2017 will be paper-based. He and Tracy Bardell confirmed that, when the tests are run fully online, students using assistive technology or requiring other accommodations will be appropriately supported.

Carol Ogilvie noted that the draft updated Special Education in Ontario – K-12 Guide by the Ministry of Education will be ready at the end of this year. She asked whether the Board is setting up a sub-committee to review the Guide and, if so, she suggested representation from SEAC on the sub-committee. Trustee Green, the Board's representative on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) reported that the Ministry's work team preparing the updated Guide includes representation from staff from different school boards and directors of education, trustees through OPSBA, and parent representatives. Superintendent Byers confirmed that he will follow up regarding the consultation process for the Guide, and report back to the Committee.

Barbara Cyr referred to the Board's IEP and IPRC brochures, and she suggested that, rather than making photocopies of the brochure available to parents, the brochures be printed on cheaper paper so that they can be distributed to parents. It was noted that the brochures are available online, as well.

**10. Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

**11. Adjournment**

SE-07, moved by Mary Wright, that the meeting adjourn (20:50 hours).

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