

February 19, 2013  
Special Education Advisory Committee:lf

## 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, February 19, 2013 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada, Chair  
Stan Cameron, Trustee, Vice-Chair  
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children  
Meredith Johnson, Trustee  
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario  
Nancy Leaton, Autism Ontario Peel Chapter  
Brad MacDonald, Trustee  
Sandy Milakovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch  
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of North Peel  
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario  
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living  
Lorraine Yuill, Learning Disabilities Association of Mississauga

Absent: (apologies received marked \*)

Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children  
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for Blind and Visually Impaired Children\*

Also present:

Marg Fishbein, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel  
Marilyn Matis, Association for Bright Children (Alternate)  
Linda Standish, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel

Administration:

Louise Sirisko, Superintendent, Special Education Support Services

Lorelei Fernandes, Board Reporter

### 1. **Approval of Agenda**

Chair Byers welcomed Jennifer Robinson and the Special Education candidates from York University to the meeting.

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Louise Sirisko, announced that Cathy White, Coordinator Special Programs Transitions, will be retiring at the end of this school year. She stated that Cathy White has been a long-standing member of the Special Education Support Services team, supporting students with autism and their families.

**1. Approval of Agenda (Continued)**

The following amendment was made to the agenda.

Item 8.1            The Use of Assistive Technology in Peel (withdrawn)

SE-19, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the agenda as amended, be approved.

..... carried  
2/3rds' majority

**2. Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**3. Special Presentation re Overview of Transition Planning for the Developmental Services of Ontario Central West Region (DSO)**

Superintendent Sirisko introduced Susan Bunn, Transition Coordinator at Developmental Services of Ontario (DSO). Ana Pauchulo, Coordinating Principal of Special Programs, advised that Special Education Support Services (SESS) will be working with DSO to help with service access.

Susan Bunn advised the Committee of her dual role as Transition Coordinator and Community Participation Support, working with two school boards in Peel region to help individuals and families to transition to DSO once the individual becomes an adult. She reviewed the history of DSO and background information in the report. Providing an overview of past service and access to services, she stated that each of the previous agencies had their own point of access, but now there is a central point of access for Ministry funded services, which could range from residential supports, independent living, supported volunteering, supported employment, person-directed planning, respite for care-givers and specialized services.

Using a PowerPoint slide presentation, Susan Bunn outlined the various services and supports provided by DSO, which included: providing information; confirming eligibility; completing application package and assessment; identifying current and future supports and services; making referrals to programs. She explained the steps on the Transition Planning Flowchart for ages 16 to 20 with respect to the eligibility criteria required, which eliminates the need for a second assessment. Susan Bunn reviewed the eligibility criteria for developmental services and supports and the documentation required to confirm eligibility, such as government-issued identification confirming residency in Ontario. A member mentioned that everyone is not aware of DSO and asked as to how it will be determined that all cases will be captured. Susan Bunn replied that DSO will be working with school boards to distribute information packages and there is information on the internet. Katie Levalds advised that Susan Bunn will be speaking to Special Education department heads shortly and suggested that she present at parent information nights in schools.

**3. Special Presentation re Overview of Transition Planning for the Developmental Services of Ontario Central West Region (DSO) (Continued)**

Ana Pauchulo drew attention to item 10.2 in the agenda which includes letters from Special Education committees of two other school boards to Ministers, regarding issues with DSO. She circulated a presentation/discussion organizer page to members, which summarized the issues identified in these letters and initiated a brainstorming session requesting written feedback from members. Discussion ensued and Susan Bunn responded to questions of clarification from members which included: changing circumstances in case of a crisis; preference given to priority cases; fear of being moved from one program to another. She stated that the services are specifically designed for very high dependent skills.

Susan Bunn spoke about passport funding, explaining that it is individualized funding for families to purchase their requirements and buy private programs rather than Ministry funded programs. Superintendent Sirisko asked if passport funding is different from Special Services at Home (SSAH) funding. Susan Bunn stated that SSAH will cover individuals under 18 years, and those individuals who turn 18 by March 31, 2013 will begin receiving passport funding for respite and personal growth and development. Susan Bunn and Louise Sirisko responded to further questions of clarification from members regarding the role of DSO, wait lists, vocational programs, psychological assessments, and students who may not qualify for funding. A member suggested having a booklet advising of DSO information and services. Susan Bunn advised that parents are informed of the services when they meet with assessors, there is information on the website, people can call the DSO office, and resources are available through the Child Development Resource Connection Peel (CDRCP).

Cathy White circulated a news release from Ombudsman Ontario regarding an investigation on the province's services for adults with developmental disabilities in crisis. She stated that families are facing a challenge with accessing these services and she encouraged members to voice their concerns through the Ombudsman.

SE-20, moved by Ann Smith, that the report re Overview of Transition Planning for the Developmental Services of Ontario Central West Region (DSO), be approved.

..... carried

**4. Special Presentation re iPad Project**

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Jane Lek, Principal of Arnott Charlton Public School, provided an overview of the iPad project which supports learning at schools. She recalled the vision for learning and instructional technology initiative, based on the concept of 21<sup>st</sup> century schools, shared by Director of Education, Tony Pontes, at the beginning of the school year and advised that teachers and students have been provided with iPads. Jane Lek spoke about project expectations and process, workshops for teachers, presenting learning and findings with superintendents of education, opportunity for teachers to start exploring different apps, using collaborative inquiry, the Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition Model (SAMR), and use of Wikispace. She advised that the project involves students in the behavior and General Learning Disability (GLD) class.

**4. Special Presentation re iPad Project (Continued)**

SE-21, moved by Lorraine Yuill, that the oral report re Special Presentation re iPad Project, be approved.

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**5. Special Presentation re Learning Disabilities Association**

Vincenza Mazzeo, of Learning Disabilities Association (LDA), provided information on the organizational structure of LDA and its role in Peel. She listed the help provided by LDA to services used by children with learning disabilities, which included: direct programs and services, newsletters to schools, one on one and group sessions for families, and workshops.

With the help of a PowerPoint presentation, Vincenza Mazzeo reviewed four of the main programs and services provided for social skills, positive conflict, computer skills, and assistive technology. Other programs offered included one on one tutoring and the Orton-Gillingham program for reading and writing strategy, which is often associated with dyslexia. She advised that these programs have a success rate of over 80%. She added that LDA also provides programs and supports for adults, a parent support group, resource counseling, reference library, and membership. Vincenza Mazzeo shared information on the 10-week positive conflict resolution program, where 75% of the parents indicated that their child is better able to deal with conflict as a result of the program. Responding to a member's question, Vincenza Mazzeo stated that some workshops and library resources are free, the programs cost between \$ 125 to \$ 150, and the fee is subsidized depending on the family income.

SE-22, moved by Barb Cyr, that the oral report re Special Presentation re Learning Disabilities Association, be approved.

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**6. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, January 15, 2013**

SE-23, moved by Meredith Johnson, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, held January 15, 2013, be approved.

..... carried

**7. Accessibility Plan January 2013 to December 2017**

Superintendent Sirisko recalled that Jennifer Miller, Accessibility Coordinator, had reviewed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) at the November 2012 SEAC meeting.

**7. Accessibility Plan January 2013 to December 2017 (Continued)**

Jennifer Miller advised that the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2013 - 2017 has been approved by the Board and is posted on Peel's website. She stated that AODA requires that the multi-year plan is updated every five years and that annual status reports are provided. Jennifer Miller reviewed the report which includes an overview of AODA and accessibility standards. She highlighted the requirements for design of public spaces, types of barriers, policies and procedures, employment standards, and reviewed the ongoing accessibility initiatives. A copy of a training brochure for volunteers was circulated and feedback was invited. Suggestions were made to: rephrase wording; add links for more information; translations into languages representative of the community; reducing font size and pictures; reducing information on background of the Act. In response to a member's question regarding requirements for training of volunteers, Jennifer Miller stated that there are requirements under the Human Rights code. She noted that the AODA policy statement needs to be included in the brochure and mentioned a suggestion to provide copies of the brochure to school councils. A member asked for more time to review the brochure and to respond with suggestions.

SE-24, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the Accessibility Plan January 2013 to December 2017, be received.

..... carried

**8. Peel Children and Youth Initiative re Free Money for Your Child's Education**

SE-25, moved by Sandy Milakovic, that the report re Peel Children and Youth Initiative re Free Money for Your Child's Education, be received.

..... carried

**9. Letter to Ministers Laurel Broten and John Milloy from SEAC Chair, Durham District School Board re Issues with Developmental Services of Ontario Agency (DSO)**

SE-26, moved by Sandy Milakovic, that the Letter to Ministers Laurel Broten and John Milloy from SEAC Chair, Durham District School Board re Issues with Developmental Services of Ontario Agency (DSO), be received.

..... carried

**10. Question Period**

Lorraine Yuill inquired about funding announced in December 2012 and how it is being used to support Individual Education Plans (IEP). Superintendent Sirisko advised that the Special Education department will be meeting next week to discuss the Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM), Ministry funding for IEP and transitions, and information will be shared at future SEAC meetings.

**10. Question Period (Continued)**

Lorraine Yuill asked about Bullying Intervention. Superintendent Sirisko advised that funding is available for Bullying Intervention. She will communicate with Jerry Powidajko, Superintendent, Leadership Development and School Support Services, and will bring back an update.

Carol Ogilvie inquired about distributing AODA information with a “top-down” approach and she will follow up with Louise Sirisko.

**11. Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

**12. Adjournment**

SE-27, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the meeting adjourn (21:05 hours).

..... carried