

## **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, March 27, 2017 at 19:00 hours.

### Members present:

Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Chair  
Nancy Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch  
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter  
David Green, Trustee  
Sue Lawton, Trustee, Vice-Chair  
Nancy Leaton, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter  
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for the Visually Impaired (19:10)  
Suzanne Nurse, Trustee  
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region  
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario  
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter (19:15)

### Members absent: (apologies received marked \*)

Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada\*  
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario\*  
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living\*  
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

### Also present:

Michelle Anderson, Peel Principals and Vice-Principals Association  
Marilyn Bruton, Peel Elementary Occasional Teachers  
Karen Del Ben, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel  
Daniele Roch, Peel Elementary Teachers' Local  
Jeff Schust, Peel Association of Secondary School Principals

### 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**

Item 1.2, Special Presentation by the Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region, was added to the agenda.

SE-24, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

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

**2. Special Presentation by the Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region**

The Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region brochure was circulated. Reviewing a PowerPoint presentation, Barbara Wallace, Executive Director of the Association, highlighted facts and statistics on learning disabilities. She noted that learning disabilities (LD) are a group of neurological conditions or brain-based problems that affect one or more ways in which a person stores or uses information. A learning disability does not imply low intelligence, mental illness or developmental delay. Reporting that ten percent of Peel's population has learning disabilities (LD), Barbara Wallace explained that LD occurs in persons with average to above average intelligence, and can affect academic functioning, social life and daily life.

Barbara Wallace indicated that the Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region is a charitable not-for-profit organization, and the local chapter of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. The Association receives its funding from the Region of Peel Social Services, United Way, Ontario Lotteries and Gaming Commission, and bingo halls. Programs and services are available to all and, in promoting positive change, the association is involved with advocacy, research, education and service. Barbara Wallace outlined the program goals, including consistency, development of the whole child, and collection of data to evaluate programs. Support is provided in the areas of academics, literacy, client services and summer programs, and the specialized and group programs offered in the areas of social skills, science and technology, youth empowerment, and planning ahead were described. In reply to a member's question as to how information about the association is shared with parents, Barbara Wallace reported that information is available on the internet, at the library, as well as through the psychoeducational assessment services of school boards. She noted that ten copies of the association's flyer have been sent to each school, and association representatives attend health fairs, information fairs, and conferences.

**3. Conflict of Interest**

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

**4. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, February 21, 2017**

SE-25, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of February 21, 2017, be approved.

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**5. Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the Peel District School Board: A Study of Teaching Assistant Staffing Practices in Special Education - Update**

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Ted Byers, advised that, in response to members' request for time to gather input from their associations, the above-noted report is brought back to this meeting, and will be brought to the next meeting as well. He thanked Ann Smith, Barbara Byers and Jennifer Knight for their participation on the Committee that met with Lindy Zaretsky, of Reaching Education Solutions Inc., who was commissioned to undertake a study into current staffing practices for Special Needs Teaching Assistants (TAs).

Providing a status report, Superintendent Byers confirmed that the TA Study Committee has been established with twelve members, including representation from principal associations, and unions. A draft action plan is being developed, and staff groups affected by the findings of the study will have the opportunity to provide input into it. The Steering Committee has made some modifications, which will be shared with SEAC once they are included in the action plan. The plan to communicate the findings and recommendations of the study to all staff is being finalized, and a Frequently Asked Questions document will be created. Responding to a member's question of clarification regarding SEAC representation on the TA Study Committee, Superintendent Byers reported that members had been asked to indicate their interest to sit on the Committee. Carol Oitment volunteered to represent SEAC, and Ted Byers confirmed that he will bring back an update report on the TA Study Committee.

SE-26, moved by Carol Oitment, that the update report re Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the Peel District School Board: A Study of Teaching Assistant Staffing Practices in Special Education, be received.

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**6. Superintendent's Report**

Members viewed the video of Peel's Plan for Student Success, which is posted on the Board's website. Superintendent Byers explained that projects have been assigned to each goal area of the Plan, and one of the projects is the Study of TA Staffing Practices in Special Education.

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

Ted Byers reported on a meeting he attended with Sharon Cook, Special Education Coordinator, related to the renewed Mental Health Strategy focusing on the secondary school level. Teams from various school boards were present, and included representation from Special Education departments. Superintendent Byers recalled that, at the January 2017 SEAC meeting, when staff reported on changes announced by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, relating to funding for Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI) and Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) programs, a member had requested a presentation on the Teachtown software. He stated that staff are still in the process of acquiring approval for installation of the software.

SE-27, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the Superintendent's Report (oral), be received.

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**7. Parkholme School: Supporting Students with Developmental Disabilities at the Secondary Level in Inclusive and Enabling Environments – Update and Addendum**

Superintendent Byers reported that the Board had approved recommendations to move classes from Parkholme School to Harold Brathwaite, Mayfield and Brampton Centennial Secondary Schools, and to begin a phased approach to decouple, or convert, satellite and resources classes associated with Parkholme and Applewood Schools into district programs. He noted that these changes had been reported to SEAC in April 2015, and he advised that the purpose was to increase program opportunities in Brampton as well as increase inclusion of students in mainstream secondary school settings. Ted Byers explained that in January 2017, due to enrolment pressures, the Board rescinded the direction of three classes to Brampton Centennial Secondary School, and approved the redirection of the classes to the new Jean Augustine Secondary School.

Superintendent Byers referred to information on decoupling phases, and noted that, as a result of the decoupling, teachers and students in the district programs, will be part of the host school.

In response to a member's questions, the administration noted the three-year timelines for decoupling the classes, and highlighted the advantage for students to belong to a school closer to home. Chair Foster asked as to plans to extend the decoupling to additional secondary schools. Superintendent Byers advised that there are no plans to extend the conversion, and that some programs need to continue being operated out of Parkholme and Applewood Schools, due to their nature, such as transition or work programs, and programs specific to facilities.

SE-28, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the report re Parkholme School: Supporting Students with Developmental Disabilities at the Secondary Level in Inclusive and Enabling Environments – Update and Addendum, be received.

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**8. Special Education Plan Development – Section C: Intellectual - Developmental Disability**

Coordinating Principal, Ana Pauchulo, reviewed the graphs included in the report which outline the range of programs at the elementary and secondary level for students identified with Intellectual – Developmental Disability. She provided details with regard to support for students and staffing, and she noted that programs are also offered to students transitioning out of the education system.

Replying to members' questions, Ana Pauchulo reported on the number of classes for transitioning students, and stated that, each year, the cohort determines the number of classes. Staffing by a teacher and TAs is dependent on the needs of the students in the class. She confirmed that the itinerant teachers have specialized training and are provided with ongoing training. Ana Pauchulo spoke about the role of the coordinator of student co-op placements, and the transition facilitator whose role is to seek opportunities for students leaving the system. With regard to including criteria in the IPRC to facilitate placement decisions, Superintendent Byers clarified that the range of student needs makes it difficult to be specific with such criteria. He indicated that consideration can be given to including information on the transition program in the Special Education website, such as describing the program, and role of the transition facilitator. He confirmed that he will follow up on the suggestion for a presentation by the transition facilitator.

SE-29, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the report re Special Education Plan Development – Section C: Intellectual - Developmental Disability, be received.

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**9. Budget Consultation**

Superintendent Byers referred to the public consultation plan for Budget 2017-2018, and he invited members to discuss or email him input on budget priorities. He noted that feedback can also be provided through the online survey to be completed before March 31, 2017, or by delegating the Board on April 12, April 25 or May 9, 2017. A member suggested that the Budget consultation schedule be provided to SEAC with sufficient time to provide input. She indicated that she did not receive the Synervoice message which alerted parents to take the online survey. Chair Foster recalled that, a few years ago, consultation meetings were being held with members after SEAC meetings, when SEAC focus and priorities were discussed. A member suggested that SEAC can schedule an informal consultation meeting after the April meeting, and bring forward a delegation on priorities to be included in the Budget discussion. Chair Foster then suggested a discussion by email on this subject.

SE-30, moved by Carol Oitment, that the report re Budget Consultation, be received.

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**10. Letter from Kelly Smigielski, SEAC Chair, and Michelle Griepsma, Chair, Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic DSB to Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter, re Special Education Funding Formula**

SE-31, moved by Nancy Leaton, that the Letter from Kelly Smigielski, SEAC Chair, and Michelle Griepsma, Chair, Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland and Clarington Catholic DSB to Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter, re Special Education Funding Formula, be received.

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**11. Reports from Representatives on Councils/Associations**

Dorothy Peddie noted that she will provide a report on the FAS Conference in British Columbia.

**12. Question Period**

Barbara Cyr reported that the Numeracy Conference is being held this week, and she invited members to send her information for the SEAC table.

**13. Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

**14. Adjournment**

SE-32, moved by David Green, that the meeting adjourn (20:30 hours).

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