

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, May 19, 2015 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada, Chair
Nancy Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter
Nokha Dakroub, Trustee
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for the Visually Impaired
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region
Fauzia Reza, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

Absent: (apologies received marked *)

Carrie Andrews, Trustee*
Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Vice-Chair*
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario*
Brad MacDonald, Trustee *
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario*

Also present:

Karen Del-ben, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel
Cheri Hearty, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region (Alternate)

Administration:

Louise Sirisko, Superintendent, Special Education Support Services (Executive Member)
Marina Amin, Board Reporter

1. Approval of Agenda

The Chair welcomed students from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to the meeting.

SE-33, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the agenda be approved.

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2. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, April 27, 2015

SE-34, moved by Nokha Dakroub, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 27, 2015, be approved.

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4. Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List

SE-35, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List, be received.

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5. Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016

SE-36, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016, be received.

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6. October Report for 2014-2015

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Louise Sirisko, stated that school boards are required to submit data to the Ministry of Education regarding the number of students reported as receiving special education support services, including identified and non-identified students, and students with exceptionalities. This data is reported twice a year, on October 31st and March 31st of the school year. With PowerPoint slides, Superintendent Sirisko highlighted data trends from 2006 to 2014 at the elementary and secondary level, by disability, noting that 41% of students supported have a learning disability. She spoke about the highly diverse population in Peel, the sensitivity and care taken with assessments, and making a diagnosis for English Language Learner support. With regard to Giftedness, Louise Sirisko referred to a decline in numbers due to the revised identification process being implemented in Peel. She noted that numbers have been fairly stable in regard to students with a mild intellectual disability, multiple exceptionalities and blind to low vision.

Responding to a trustee's question, Superintendent Sirisko, explained that, while the number of students reported as receiving services is a data point for Ministry funding, actual funding is based on the funding formula. The data would assist the Ministry with future decisions, and help school boards make informed choices about programs, and providing supports and services.

6. October Report for 2014-2015 (Continued)

Further questions of clarification from members were responded to, including that: although students with a mild intellectual disability are not reflected in the data, funding and support services are not affected; Peel does not have classes for partial integration, but students are integrated even if they are in contained classes. Louise Sirisko explained that students who do not meet the criteria for identification of giftedness, are placed in a cluster setting in the In-School Enhanced Learning Program (ISELP), and receive enhanced learning supports from their classroom teacher. She clarified that staff are working to ensure that ISELP student numbers are captured in the data. A member asked whether female students are under-reported. The administration will bring back a response.

SE-37, moved by Nokha Dakroub, that the October Report for 2014-2015, be received.

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7. Budget Development and Grants for 2015-2016

A report on the Budget for 2015 – 2016 – Summary of Revenues was circulated.

Shirley Chan-Ng, Manager of Budgets and Grants, provided an overview of the Grants, and the proposed budget estimates for 2015 – 2016, as outlined in the above-noted report. She highlighted the increase in Special Education grant of approximately \$5.6 million, largely due to a projected increase in the Average Daily Enrolment, and revisions to the High Needs Amount funding formula. Shirley Chan-Ng noted that the Special Education Per Pupil Amount of \$112.5 million is based on all student enrolment. Responding to a member's query, she provided a breakdown of amounts allocated to special equipment and high needs, special incidence portion, Section 23 students, and behaviour exceptionalities. An email outlining these allocations will be sent to the member.

Superintendent Sirisko reported that one of the priority items for discussion on the budget for next year will be a request for an additional 50 teaching assistants to support incoming students, and additional contained classes.

SE-38, moved by Nancy Bratkovic, that the report re Budget Development and Grants for 2015-2016, be received.

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8. Labour Update

Superintendent Sirisko provided an update report on the labour situation in Peel. She stated that the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) is still on strike, and all secondary schools are closed. Louise Sirisko reported on the application filed with the Ontario Labour Relations Board to declare the OSSTF strike unlawful as it is being waged on central issues at the local level.

8. Labour Update (Continued)

Additionally, Superintendent Sirisko indicated that Premier Wynne is seeking an advisement of jeopardy from the Education Relations Commission. She noted that this decision will be contingent upon the government considering legislating OSSTF back to the classroom. Louise Sirisko spoke of daily interaction with the Ministries of Children and Youth Services, Community and Social Services, Education and Health and Long Term Care regarding supports and services to students with special needs. She noted that families of students with high intense needs are being connected to the appropriate services, and requests for support are on the increase.

Superintendent Sirisko reported that the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) is on work to rule action, which includes not attending professional development sessions, or staff meetings, not entering comments in the report cards, etc. Currently, special education supports and services are not affected. Student Individual Education Plans will be written, but reporting on student progress will be minimal. Teachers will attend In-School Review Committee meetings, and complete the paper work for students requiring special support services.

Questions of clarification were responded to, including: strategy for Phase 2 of ETFO job action is not known; IPRCs have been relocated; redeployment of secondary Teaching Assistants (TAs) into the elementary panel has shown positive results.

SE-39, moved by Wes McDonald that the oral update report re Labour, be received.

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9. Draft SEAC letter re: Regulation 274

A draft letter to the Minister of Education, Liz Sandals, was circulated. A member noted that this was not the letter drafted by her. Superintendent Sirisko clarified that the letter drafted by the member will be circulated electronically for SEAC members to review. Feedback may be provided, and the final letter to Minister Sandals will be approved electronically.

10. Question Period

Barbara Cyr stated that the Parent Involvement Committee has donated \$250 to SEAC for its events. Indicating the need for a banner, she asked for feedback on design and content. Barbara Cyr asked Louise Sirisko about SEAC having its own email address which can be printed on the banner. Louise Sirisko will follow up on this request.

Cheri Hearty asked for details about the status of negotiations and when the federations will be back at the bargaining table. Louise Sirisko advised that central table negotiations are scheduled to begin tomorrow. No dates, as yet, have been indicated for local bargaining. Wes McDonald asked whether dates will be decided after hearing the outcome of the court cases. Trustee Dakroub will follow up for further information with the Chair of the Board.

11. Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

12. Adjournment

SE-40, moved by Mary Wright, that the meeting adjourn (20:00 hours).

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