

## 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 Wednesday, October 19, 2016 at 19:00 hours.

### Members present:

Shelley Foster, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Vice-Chair  
Nancy, Bratkovic, Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch  
Barbara Cyr, Association for Bright Children, Peel Chapter  
David Green, Trustee  
Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario  
Sue Lawton, Trustee  
Nancy Leaton, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter  
Wes McDonald, VIEWS for the Visually Impaired (19:10)  
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter  
Carol Ogilvie, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region  
Carol Oitment, Tourette Syndrome Association of Ontario  
Harkirat Singh, Trustee  
Mary Wright, Peel Caring Network for Challenged Kids

### Absent: (apologies received)

Barbara Byers, Fragile X Research Foundation of Canada, Chair  
Ann Smith, Brampton-Caledon Community Living

### Also present:

Namrata Balsara, Canadian Mental Health Association (Alternate)  
Thomas Corbett, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region (Alternate)  
Karen Del Ben, Educational Resource Facilitators of Peel  
Fauzia Reza, Autism Ontario Peel Chapter, (Alternate)  
Daniele Roch, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

### Administration:

Ted Byers, Superintendent of Special Education Support Services (Executive Member)  
Marina Amin, Board Reporter

### 1. Approval of Agenda

Vice-Chair, Shelley Foster, chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chair, Barbara Byers. She welcomed newly appointed alternate for the Canadian Mental Health Association, Peel Branch, Namrata Balsara, to the meeting, and invited Nancy Bratkovic to introduce her.

SE-66, moved by Barbara Cyr, 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, September 20, 2016**

SE-67, moved by Carol Oitment, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, held September 20, 2016, be approved.

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**4. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Ted Byers reported on the event held on October 5, 2016, to celebrate the launch of the Mental Health Priority Group projects, and he thanked Nancy Bratkovic and Nancy Leaton for their attendance. He noted that each of the priority groups made presentations on the work being done to support the five goals identified in the Mental Health Strategy, namely, to promote mental health awareness and reduce stigma, create an improved understanding of suicide, develop a deeper acceptance of the meaning of mental health across Peel's diverse community, continue to develop collaborative working relationships, and increase the system's responsiveness to mental health needs. Members expressed appreciation for the work being done by the priority groups, and the ongoing planning and provision of resources.

SE-68, moved by Nancy Bratkovic, that the Superintendent's Report (oral), be received.

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**5. Updated SEAC Member List**

Nancy Bratkovic provided an update to her contact information.

SE - 69, moved by Barbara Cyr, that the report re Special Education Plan 2016-2017, be received.

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**6. SEAC Annual Calendar Draft - 2016 – 2017 Agenda and Goals**

Superintendent Byers thanked members for their feedback at the last meeting, and stated that the draft Annual Calendar reflects the Committee's requests for frequent reports and updates on programs and services. He noted that, while the calendar can be modified, it provides a plan for the Special Education department in terms of reports to be brought to Committee members. Superintendent Byers also drew attention to the frequent update reports that are brought back to the Committee, as projects are redeveloped and services improved.

**6. SEAC Annual Calendar Draft - 2016 – 2017 Agenda and Goals (Continued)**

A member asked that an Accessibility update report be included for the month of September.

SE-70, moved by Carol Ogilvie, that the report re SEAC Annual Calendar Draft - 2016 – 2017 Agenda and Goals, be received.

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**7. Special Education Plan Development – Section E: Intervention Strategies and Procedures**

Superintendent Byers reviewed the Special Education Plan webpage outlining Table of Content and Sections of the Plan, and he noted that York Region DSB's Special Education Plan was used as a source for developing the template. He advised that the report highlights the strategies and resources available to teachers to support non-identified students. Staff Development Coordinator, Nora Green, spoke about instructional strategies that a classroom teacher can use to identify that a child has special learning needs, including assessment and data collection to develop a student profile, and monitoring student progress with targeted support, to determine when a child is in need of formalized professional support. Special Education Coordinator, Tracy Bardell, provided details about next steps in the intervention process, after the requirement of additional support is determined. She outlined the In School Review Committee (ISRC) process that involves the parents, and the ISRC team, noting that it is at this Committee that the student's needs are discussed and a new intervention plan developed, with parental consent. This process may include a referral to the Identification and Placement Review Committee (IPRC). It was noted that students have access to Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) whether or not they have an identification, and that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a requirement for a non-identified student, irrespective of the student being referred to the IPRC.

Members' questions of clarification were responded to by the administration, including: setting a timeframe on student progress is a challenge as each child progresses in a different trajectory, however, a student can make positive progress within two-months; Teaching Assistants (TA) are allocated to students who have undergone diagnostic tests and have multiple needs; Peel has a TA allocation module in the Student Information System. A member spoke positively about the interaction and collaboration with parents when an education plan is being developed for a child, and Superintendent Byers confirmed that, in addition to this interaction, there is ongoing monitoring of the child's educational plan. He also explained that schools have other support staff, including behaviour and itinerant teachers, In School Support Program (ISSP) teachers, and psychologists, who assist students in need. A member requested the parent's role in intervention strategies and procedure be highlighted in the plan, so that parents have a clearer understanding of the process. Superintendent Byers agreed that parent input is helpful and that schools are encouraged to include parents in ongoing dialogue to support their child's success.

**7. Special Education Plan Development – Section E: Intervention Strategies and Procedures (Continued)**

SE - 71, moved by Dorothy Peddie, that the report re Special Education Plan Development – Section E: Intervention Strategies and Procedures, be received.

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**8. Special Education Department Goals and Projects 2016-2017- Update**

Ted Byers reviewed three goals identified by Special Education department staff, namely, Theory of Action which involves an in depth study of a student's profile to provide supports that will positively impact performance, PRIME Math training for ISSP teachers, and Links to Literacy, and he invited staff to speak about the Professional Development (PD) opportunities scheduled for teachers.

Chief Speech Pathologist, Lorie Grant provided details about the PD sessions for principals on October 26 and November 24, 2016. She noted that the session for teachers on November 30, 2016 will provide an opportunity to reflect and network on different teaching and learning strategies and skills. There will also be a refresher course for teachers on Empower. Tracy Bardell recalled her report at the last SEAC meeting regarding training for In-School Support Program staff, and stated that 340 staff attended the ISSP Institute on September 20, 2016, at which Trustee Stan Cameron was the keynote speaker. Tracy Bardell spoke about the Renewed Mathematics strategy, and the development of positive partnerships between Special Education Resource Teachers and classroom teachers in finding appropriate strategies and developing programs to best support students. Regarding parent workshops on new mathematics strategies, Tracy Bardell stated that, in addition to the annual workshop, there is need to develop resources for parents. Lorie Grant updated members on the Links to Literacy program, which was delivered in seven of the eight schools selected last year. She noted that the program will be offered in another eight schools, this year. Responding to a member's query, Lorie Grant stated that ISSP teachers refer Grades 2 and 3 students into the program, and she confirmed that students can enter the program as long as they meet the criteria.

A member queried the mechanisms that schools use to distribute information about students' IEPs to their teachers, in view of the large number. She reported on a complaint about a teacher's unawareness of a student's IEP till two months into the new school year, or after the first school test. Superintendent Byers provided details about the varied support staff available to special needs students, and ongoing monitoring at the secondary level. He further clarified that the timeline for development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is thirty school days, and that the IEP must reflect the current school year's program. Additionally, there is an expectation that the IEP is communicated to all staff working with the student, to ensure that accommodations are provided. It was noted that, at the elementary level, all IEPs are accompanied with a transition plan that includes details of support.

SE - 72, moved by Carol Oitment, that the update report re Special Education Department Goals and Projects 2016-2017, be received.

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**9. Letter from Anne Haley, SEAC Chair, Renfrew County Catholic DSB to SEAC Chairs re: PPM 156 “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Needs”**

SE - 73, moved by Wes McDonald, that the Letter from Anne Haley, SEAC Chair, Renfrew County Catholic DSB to SEAC Chairs re: PPM 156 “Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Needs”, be received.

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**10. Response of Administration to Former Questions**

**1. Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

Responding to a query raised at the last SEAC meeting, Superintendent Byers stated that the Ministry memorandum dated September 8, 2016, regarding Special Education Information, refers to recommendations to the Minister of Education that include the development and reporting of the IEP. He noted that the Ministry of Education has identified its commitment to reviewing and updating the IEP guidelines, and he spoke of a reminder in the memo about creating an IEP within the first thirty days of the school year.

**2. Submission of Accessibility Report in September**

Superintendent Byers stated that the question about an accessibility report will be forwarded to the Human Resources Support Services, since he is not a member of the Accessibility Committee. It was noted that the Committee has not met in a while. A member stated that the Accessibility Committee had committed to providing an update report, which members have not yet received.

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

Barbara Cyr announced that the Great Start event takes place on November 9, 2016 and she asked members to let her know if they had brochures to display. She also asked for volunteers at the table from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Barbara Cyr indicated that the Parent Conference – Numeracy and Beyond is scheduled for April 1, 2017, and that a display table has been offered to SEAC. She asked members to bring brochures and to convey to her their interest in staffing the table. She stated that individual associations may contribute an item to the conference bag, noting that there will be approximately 1200 bags. Barbara Cyr advised that the organizers are also looking for prize contributions, and she asked interested members to contact Avishka Juta in the Communications department in this regard.

**12. Question Period**

Barbara Cyr spoke about challenges in delivering equipment to students due to supply problems, and asked whether similar problems are experienced in Peel. Tracy Bardell explained that supply problems were experienced in the past, but, after working consistently with the supplier at the beginning of the school year regarding the Board’s requirements, there have been no issues, so far.

**12. Question Period (Continued)**

Barbara Cyr asked about further development of the In-School Enhanced Learning Program (ISELP). Tracy Bardell explained that, during discussions with resource teachers, it was highlighted that the data collected during October 2012 to November 2013 was outdated and did not reflect current understanding of the system. There was discussion about completing another survey to obtain input regarding funding and resources available, ISELP teachers, release time for PD, and after school site-based PD. Tracy Bardell suggested a meeting with the member to discuss questions and concerns, and ways to provide support.

Nancy Leaton indicated that parents are concerned about supports for Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) students, and she asked for a copy of the letter addressed to the Minister of Education by the Chair of the Peel DSB on this subject.

Superintendent Byers stated that the Ministry of Education has approved funding to school boards, and has set up a Committee to review the process for providing supports. He will bring back a report to SEAC on this item. Ted Byers also indicated that a communication will be sent to parents outlining the process for supporting students with IBI.

David Green reported that the Ontario Public School Boards' Association has provided their input during discussions with the Committee struck to review process. He noted that the Committee's recommendations have been presented to the Ministry and a response is awaited. David Green will follow up for a copy of the letter and recommendations addressed to the Ministry, for members of SEAC to review.

**13. Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

**14. Adjournment**

SE-74, moved by Mary Wright, that the meeting adjourn (21:05 hours).

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..... Chair ..... Secretary

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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At a meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held October 19, 2016, there were no recommendations to the Board.

### **FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

#### **1. Reports / Information Received**

The Committee received the following reports/information: Superintendent's Report (oral); Updated SEAC Member List; SEAC Annual Calendar Draft – 2016 – 2017 Agenda and Goals; Special Education Plan Development – Section E: Intervention Strategies and Procedures; Special Education Department Goals and Projects 2016-2017 – Update (oral); Letter from Anne Haley, SEAC Chair, Renfrew County Catholic DSB to SEAC Chairs re: PPM 156 "Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Needs."

Prepared by:

Marina Amin  
Board Reporter

Submitted by:

Ted Byers  
Superintendent of Special Education Support Services

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