

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, September 19, 2017 at 19:00 hours.

Members present:

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

Members absent: (apologies received)

Jennifer Knight, Easter Seals Ontario
Dorothy Peddie, FASworld Canada, Peel Chapter

Also present:

Kathy McDonald, Trustee

Administration:

Ted Byers, Superintendent of Special Education Support Services
Shirley-Ann Teal, Acting Superintendent of Education and Executive Back-up Member
Poleen Grewal, Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services
Peter Joshua, Director of Education
Scott Moreash, Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services

Marina Amin, Board Reporter

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Item 1.2, Special Presentation of the video "All That We Share" was added to the agenda. Chair Foster welcomed Thomas Corbett, who replaces Carol Ogilvie as the representative of Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region (LDAPR). She noted that Carol Ogilvie will continue as the alternate member of LDAPR. Shelley Foster also welcomed Director of Education, Peter Joshua, to the meeting.

1. Approval of Agenda (Continued)

Providing a short background of his education in Peel, and career over the past 28 years, Director Joshua expressed appreciation for the positive attitude, collaborative processes, inclusivity, interdisciplinary approach to education, and the resources available to support learning for the success of all children in Peel. He highlighted the importance of meeting the requirements of all special needs students with the funding and programming opportunities available in Peel. Chair Foster advised that Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services, Scott Moreash, will be retiring as of September 30, 2017, and that this is the last SEAC meeting he will attend. On behalf of the Committee, she thanked Scott Moreash for his work and support. Shelley Foster welcomed Poleen Grewal, the new Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services, to the meeting, as well as members in the audience.

SE-61, moved by Ann Smith, that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

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(2/3rds' majority)

2. Special Presentation: "All That We Share" Video

Committee members viewed the video "All That We Share" that depicts and recognizes the diversity that exists in Peel. Superintendent Byers commented that the video has been aired at various locations in the Board, and highlights much of the work being done on diversity in Peel.

3. Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting, June 13, 2017

In regard to Item 6 of the Minutes, Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the Peel District School Board: A Study of Teaching Assistant Staffing Practices in Special Education, a member clarified the comments made by her which indicated that there was opportunity in the Special Education Plan to outline efforts being made to foster collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants, and she stated that specific examples had been provided to the Teaching Assistant Committee.

SE-62, moved by Carol Oitment, that the Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of June 13, 2017, be approved.

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5. Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Draft)

Superintendent of Special Education Support Services, Ted Byers, advised that the draft document entitled, Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12, was received by the Board in electronic format in August 2017. He noted that the document is comprehensive and includes current information about special education legislation, regulation and policy. Superintendent Byers stated that copies will be distributed to schools, and the document will serve as a resource for administrator training and professional learning. He asked members to review the draft document, which can be discussed at the Committee meeting in October 2017, when staff will provide a brief report, and respond to questions, comments and concerns. Responding to a trustee's question, Ted Byers clarified that while the Ministry has encouraged sharing the document, there has been no advice on a finalized version. As requested, the link to the document will be emailed to SEAC members, and posted on the Board's website.

SE-63, moved by Sue Lawton, that the report re Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Draft), be received.

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6. Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (IR) – Update on Next Steps

Superintendent Byers reported that the Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services initiative is a component of Ontario's Special Needs Strategy. He thanked Lorie Grant, Chief Speech Pathologist, and Ana Pauchulo, Coordinating Principal, for their work and involvement since its inception, and noted that regular reports have been brought to SEAC on this multi-Ministry project. Ted Byers highlighted the multi-Ministry memo dated September 1, 2017, which acknowledges the work of Steering Committees, service provider agencies, and school boards in developing regional proposals for coordinated rehabilitation services in line with the province's vision for a simplified access model. Superintendent Byers advised that, at this time, phase one comes to a close, and Steering Committees have been asked to cease further work. The provincial advisory group will provide direction on implementation of phase two of this project. He indicated that SEAC members will be updated as more information is made available to the Board.

SE-64, moved by Suzanne Nurse, that the report re Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (IR) – Update on Next Steps, be received.

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7. Ontario Autism Program (OAP) – Expenditures and Priorities

Superintendent Byers advised that periodic updates haven been brought to SEAC on the funding received for the new Ontario Autism Program, and on the goals and projects that the Board has embarked upon. Highlighting some of last year's projects and expenses, he spoke briefly about Teachtown and the licenses purchased, and invited Special Education Coordinator, Nora Green and Special Units Itinerant Teacher, Andrea Dowell, to provide further details about the trial sessions with students.

7. Ontario Autism Program (OAP) – Expenditures and Priorities (Continued)

Nora Green spoke about Teachtown trial sessions with some secondary and elementary students in the After School Development Program. She advised that teacher training is in progress for early implementation in the classroom. Andrea Dowell's presentation outlined benefits of the trial summer program held for students, parents, and caregivers. She highlighted the boost in parent confidence from learning and modelling the skills required to nurture their child's independence, social and communication skills, and interact with them. Next steps will include offering a winter session for parents and caregivers, and organizing summer sessions for students. Nora Green reviewed details of proposed activities outlined in the report, which include training of school staff, resources to support students, alternative programs, and writing teams who will create support documents for teachers. She responded to a member's question of clarification regarding the total expenditure for the 2016-2017 school year, noting that a significant amount was spent on purchasing Teachtown, a web based Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) software, for 250 students, and staff training. She stated that results of the pilot will dictate recommendations for funding this program through SEA.

Chair Foster expressed appreciation for the training provided to parents and caregivers, which, she commented, will positively impact the lives of all children in Peel.

SE-65, moved by Nancy Leaton, that the report re Ontario Autism Program (OAP) – Expenditures and Priorities, be received.

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8. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Byers introduced incoming staff in the Special Education department, Michelle Anderson, Coordinating Principal, Special Programs – Special Equipment Amount, and Katina Paleologos, Coordinating Principal, Special Programs – Autism Spectrum Disorder. He thanked Shirley-Ann Teal, Acting Superintendent of Education, for her continued support in the absence of Pertia Minot.

Reporting on the Special Education department business cases totaling \$11.5 million brought forward for inclusion in the budget for the 2017-2018 school year, Superintendent Byers expressed appreciation for the Board's support and acknowledgement of the various programs implemented in Peel for special needs students, and the hiring of staff to deliver them. He spoke of increasing SEAC's involvement in the budget process, and invited members to provide suggestions and ideas. Ted Byers advised that a report will be brought later in the year regarding the new Kindergarten support teacher position. He reported on the hiring of thirteen Assistive Technology Resource Teachers (ATRT), one for each superintendency, who will support the effective use of assistive technology. Michelle Anderson provided further details about the role of ATRTs in schools, that will include, training staff on Google Read and Write, providing assistance with development of Individual Education Plans (IEP) and embedding assistive technology into the program. She noted that Bridges Canada Inc. will also be involved in this training.

8. Superintendent's Report (Continued)

Superintendent Byers thanked Nancy Leaton of Autism Ontario's Peel Chapter, and Nancy Bratkovic of Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch, for their involvement on the Mental Health Advisory Committee. He also thanked Maureen Mackay for her leadership in the implementation of the Board's Mental Health Strategy. Noting that work is ongoing, he advised that regular updates will be provided to members, and results of the survey conducted will inform the Board's priorities for the next phase of the initiative. The results will be shared with members this fall. A trustee suggested that it may be beneficial to include a written Superintendent's report in the agenda for members to review, so that critical questions can be responded to during the meeting.

SE-66, moved by David Green, that the Superintendent's oral report be received.

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9. SEAC Annual Calendar - Draft

Superintendent Byers reviewed the draft SEAC Annual Calendar, noting the opportunity it provides for members to identify the topics they would like to receive reports on during the course of the year. A member asked about possibility for SEAC members to informally discuss their association priorities. Members speaking suggested renewing the practice from some years ago, when, following adjournment of the Committee meeting after an hour, members met in an open forum, for informal discussion. This suggestion was accepted by the Committee. Chair Foster asked members to discuss with their associations and bring back ideas and priorities to the next meeting. Associations interested in making presentations can email Ted Byers with their requests.

SE-67, moved by Thomas Corbett, that the report re SEAC Annual Calendar - Draft, be received.

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

Superintendent Byers stated that an update report was provided at the June 13, 2017 SEAC meeting on the work of the Steering Committee, and he thanked Carol Oitment for her involvement. Displaying a chart that outlined Year One Action Items and System Deliverables, Special Education Coordinator, Nora Green, reported on the work of summer writing teams to develop resources that support the action items of year one, that include: defining equity; inclusive education and functional independence; job embedded supports for teaching; supportive technology; collaboration and teamwork; roles and responsibilities; teaching assistant professional learning; scheduling with effectiveness and efficiency. Superintendent Byers advised that periodic reports will be provided to the Committee.

SE-68, moved by Ann Smith, that the oral 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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11. Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List

The updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member list was reviewed and changes, if any, will be forwarded to Superintendent Byers.

SE-69, moved by Mary Wright, that the Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List, be received.

12. Response of Administration to Former Questions

Barbara Cyr stated that she had asked about the Board's graduation rates. She indicated that there was discussion about the Identification, Placement and Review Committee process not being clear to parents. Superintendent Byers responded that information on these two items will be brought to a future meeting.

13. Question Period

There were no questions.

14. Public Question Period

Vincenza Gruppuso asked about implementation plans following the study on Teaching Assistant Staffing Practices. Superintendent Byers responded.

15. Adjournment

SE-70, moved by Barbara Byers, that the meeting adjourn (20:45 hours).

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held September 19, 2017, there were no recommendations to the Board.

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

1. Reports / Information Received

The Committee received the following reports/information: Special Presentation: "All That We Share" Video; Special Education in Ontario: Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Draft); Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services (IR) – Update on Next Steps; Ontario Autism Program (OAP) – Expenditures and Priorities; Superintendents Report (oral); SEAC Annual Calendar - Draft; Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the Peel District School Board: A Study of Teaching Assistant Staffing Practices in Special Education (oral); Updated Special Education Advisory Committee Member List.

Prepared by:

Marina Amin
Board Reporter

Submitted by:

Ted Byers
Superintendent of Special Education Support Services
