



COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee Name: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Date: Monday, November 4, 2014

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Present: Diana Avon , Catherine Drillis, Michelle Brick, Mitchell Curci, Aline Chan, Paul Cross, Elaine Dodsworth-Lever, Deborah Fletcher, Clovis Grant, Nora Green, Trustee John Hastings, Olga Ingrahm, Trustee Howard Kaplan, Steven Lynette, Jean-Paul Ngana, Philip Sargent, Trustee Sam Sotiropoulos, Cynthia Springings,

Regrets: Christina Buczek, Richard Carter, Debra Hayden, Margarita Isakov, Ginny Pearce, Najia Shafi,

Staff: Uton Robinson, Anne Seymour, Margo Ratsep

Guests: Karen Meeson, TDSB Comptroller of Finance

Recorder: Linda Mendonca & Margo Ratsep

ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION/ MOTION
1. Call to Order/Quorum	A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7pm on Monday, November 4, 2014 in the Board Room, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario with Michelle Brick presiding as Chair. Quorum was achieved at 7:10 pm.	
2. Approval of Agenda	Motion: Jean-Paul moved that the agenda be approved as amended. All in favour	Motion carried.
3. Declaration of Possible Conflicts of Interest	Philip Sargent declared a possible conflict if any motions arise from the presentation on bus transportation.	
4. Confirmation of Minutes	Motion: Olga Ingrahm moved that the minutes from October 6, 2014 be approved. All in favour. Diana Avon asked that staff reports continue to be appended to SEAC minutes. Uton Robinson undertook to do this.	Motion carried.
5. Delegations/Presentations	<p>1. Member Presentation: Easter Seals Ontario (Deborah Fletcher) SEAC received a presentation from Deborah Fletcher representing SEAC Association member Easter Seals. The presentation covered the kinds of supports/programs available to parents of children with physical disabilities. Information about Easter Seals Ontario can be found on their website at www.easterseals.com</p> <p>2. Staff Presentation: Student Transportation SEAC received a presentation on Student Transportation from the TDSB Comptroller of Finance, Karen Meeson. TDSB delivers bus transportation through a consortium with the Toronto Catholic DSB, accommodating 48,000 students and using 6 different contractors.</p>	

	<p>New ways of communicating with parents are under development, including a new website for the Consortium: www.torontoschoolbus.org and a phone number routed for answering questions (416-394-4BUS). In the near future, the website will use a banner across the top of the webpage to inform about delays, cancellations, and will also send e-mails to affected schools. Bus routes and maps will be provided. A password protected parent portal is also being created for parent sign up to receive smart phone notifications about transportation routes and cancellations for their own children. SEAC members were invited to provide input/recommendations/questions for inclusion in their work.</p> <p>SEAC members provided the following input and recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the establishment of a transportation call centre, for responding to parent questions and transportation issues, especially during the first 4 weeks of school when services are starting up • That bus drivers receive training in how to interact more positively with students with special needs • That eligibility for transportation take safety considerations more into account (than the 3.2 km distance requirement), especially for students with vision or hearing impairment • That 72 passenger buses have lifts and tie downs to facilitate greater inclusion (and less segregation) for students with special needs for those supports • That the bussing RFP include access to some accessible buses for field trips so that physically disabled students can accompany classmates • That the consortium website provide the definition for a “severe medical condition” and identify acceptable documentation, to assist parents in determining transportation eligibility <p>***Action: Karen Meeson will take forward the suggestions in her work with the consortium and work closely with the Special Education department to see how they can provide better service and communicate more effectively with parents.</p>	
<p>6. Open Discussion and Consultation</p>	<p>1. Autism Ontario: Raise the Flag for Autism</p> <p>Information was shared about a school-based fundraiser for Autism. On-line registration is required.</p> <p>Action: Margo Ratsep undertook to provide information to schools through the system weekly Direct Line.</p> <p>2. New TDSB Requirements for Community Advisory Committees (CAC)</p> <p>Margo Ratsep reported on the October 28th CAC Review Update meeting held by the Parent and Community Engagement Office (PCEO), and distributed a two page synopsis of new requirements. SEAC already meets most of the requirements since they are legislated.</p>	

	<p>SEAC will need to address requirements for Self-Evaluation and a Code of Conduct. To facilitate inter-CAC information sharing, the PCEO office will invite all CAC's to meet two times a year (at the beginning and at the end of the school year). PCEO is also looking at ways to improve and develop communication and collaboration between members, possibly using AW (Academic Workspace)</p> <p>SEAC members gave the following input:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to build into the Code of Conduct how SEAC is to manage confidential information during TDSB consultations • Inappropriate language was used in the CAC Review, where it states the Board “decided” that PIAC and SEAC continue, since SEAC and PIAC are legislated committees and it is not a board decision • A specified calendar of SEAC engagement in consultations with the TDSB needs to be developed, outlining a SEAC engagement cycle 	
<p>7. Business Arising from the Minutes</p>	<p>1. Letter to Tri-Ministries</p> <p>Michelle Brick reported that the SEAC letter regarding Speech Language services was amended as requested at the October meeting and is ready to be forwarded to the Ministries of Education, Health and Child and Youth Services. A copy of the letter was provided to members.</p> <p>2. Follow-Up re: Parent Conference</p> <p>Uton Robinson reported that the date for the SEAC/PIAC conference has not been finalized. The conference is a PIAC-SEAC initiative, designed to engage parents with children with special needs. The original proposal was for the end of January. Given time requirements for planning this event, and the timing of the SEAC membership renewal process, a later date (such as March/April) might be easier to manage. A decision about it being an annual conference is currently dependent on Director funding. The joint planning committee has not met.</p>	
<p>8. Trustee Reports and Follow-Up on Previous Action Items</p>	<p>Trustee Kaplan reported that half the current Board changes at the end of November and will be replaced at the Board Re-Organization meeting on December 1, 2014. Trustee Kaplan hopes to continue with SEAC.</p>	
<p>9. Reports/Updates from Active SEAC Subcommittees</p>	<p>None noted.</p>	
<p>10. Special Education Department Updates</p>	<p>Special Education Department Updates</p> <p>Superintendent Robinson provided an update. (See Appendix A on page 5)</p> <p>Superintendent Seymour provided an update. (See Appendix B on page 6)</p> <p>Discussion followed about accommodations at the secondary level, including the question</p>	

	<p>“When students graduate, do they receive a Certificate of Achievement?” Superintendent Seymour explained ways in which students receive recognition for credits obtained: There is a set of prescribed credits (30) that a student needs to achieve in order to achieve an Ontario Secondary School <u>Diploma</u> (OSSD). For those students who have not been able to achieve all 30 credits, the Ontario Secondary School <u>Certificate</u> (OSSC) requires the achievement of 14 credits, 7 prescribed and 7 optional. There is also a Certificate of Accomplishment, which may be granted to those students who leave school and are unable to fulfill the requirements for either an OSSD or OSSC. To support post-secondary transitions, in addition to the transition planning required for PPM140 for students with Autism, the new PPM 156 requires Transition planning for every student with an IEP.</p>	
<p>11. Correspondence Received by the Chair</p>	<p>The SEAC Chair received the following correspondence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of letter dated October 8, 2014 to Ministers Liz Sandals (Education), Tracy MacCharles (Children and Youth Services) and Dr. Eric Hoskins (Health and Long-Term Care) from Kate O’Donnell, SEAC Chair for Grand Erie DSB re: support for Deloitte Review recommendations for the provision of Speech and Language Services 2. Copy of letter dated September 18, 2014 to Jason Bartlett, SEAC Chair for Halton DSB, from LHIN Chief Executive Officers Donna Cripps (Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant) and Bill MacLeod (Mississauga Halton) in response to SEAC concerns about access to school health support services 3. Copy of letter dated October 7, 2014 to Minister of Education Liz Sandals from SEAC Chair Lynne Smart, Durham Catholic DSB re making Special Education Part 1 a required additional qualification for all teachers, new graduates at a minimum. 	
<p>12. New Business</p>	<p>None noted.</p>	
<p>13. Agenda Setting for Future Meetings</p>	<p>Agenda Setting for Future Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ December 8, 2014 – Current members will continue until new membership is appointed ▪ January 12, 2015 – Tentative date pending new board calendar <p>Upcoming Consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget Consultation ▪ Technology Strategy ▪ Inclusion Strategy 	
<p>14. Adjournment</p>	<p>***Motion: Clovis moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. All approved.</p>	<p>Motion carried.</p>

Next Meeting Date: December 8, 2014

Department Update – Executive Superintendent Uton Robinson

On behalf of the TDSB, Superintendent Robinson expressed thanks to the SEAC members and alternates who would be leaving SEAC at the end of November:

Autism Ontario – Oksana Romanov
Brain Injury Society of Toronto – Judy Moir
Learning Disabilities Association Toronto District – Michelle Brick and Mitchell Curci
NE Community – Wendy Huang
NW Community – Debra Hayden, Karen Prizzon and Bantyeahun Tezazu
SE Community – Najia Shafi, Melissa Melnitzer
SW Community – Christina Buczek, Cathy Mallove
Trustees – Sam Sotiropoulos, John Hastings

Special Education Department

We welcome Janine Small as the new East Region Vice Principal for Special Education.

District Review Process

A new District Review process is being looked at for congregated sites, led by System Superintendent Annie Appleby.

Special Education Website Update

Superintendent Jeff Hainbuch is moving forward with the Special Education Websites Update to make it user friendly and to ensure that we provide plain languages resources, (IEP, IPRC's). We are organizing a series of plans for the team. There is a 6-month timeline for a new look for the website to be operational for Sept 2015. We want to ensure the information is current. Input from SEAC is invited about ways to make the external website more parent-friendly.

Action for Inclusion Strategy

Superintendent Robinson reported that the department is looking at providing high quality, differentiated instruction, and valued SEAC efforts at the pre-meeting to provide input. Margo will collate the input gathered and report back at the next meeting. The template information from all consultations will support a foundational piece for models of greater inclusion. Next steps involve looking at the 'what ifs' of moving more students with special needs to regular programs. We want to ensure a more enabling environment for student achievement and social/emotional well-being, and provide measured staff support to ensure that schools continue to do their good work. Some students will still require additional support in a regular environment. Inclusion will be looked at in phases. For example, there are about 430 Primary students in our Intensive Support Learning Disabilities, Mild Intellectual Development, and Behavioural programs. Through our IPRC review process we are exploring the number of students who may return to their neighbourhood school. We are mindful of the support that will be required from principals, teachers, support staff and parents.

Department Update – Superintendent Anne Seymour

We have a meeting this Wednesday with the Secondary Steering Committee to discuss further some of the questions that were raised during that last SEAC meeting. The secondary staff works on many different projects with the Teaching and Learning department and the Student Success department. On November 19th, there will be CL/ACL secondary meeting where many of the issues that have been brought forward from the last SEAC meeting will be addressed.

Executive functioning is one of the components of the GLE curriculum at secondary school, as well as, a focus on self- advocacy in that curriculum. There is an expectation that secondary schools offer the course where needed. Most of the staff in the Special Education department at the secondary school level works very closely with the subject teachers of students identified with IEP. There is usually a very close collaboration between teachers and the curriculum document from the Ministry website and the needs of the students with IEP's are addressed. Secondary IEP's are pulled by a group of teachers, consultants, and special education teachers at the school. Some IEP's are developed really well, but there are some challenges with implementation in the classroom instruction with some others depending on the degree of need for modifications.

Because there are three different levels of instruction used for credit granting at the secondary school, modifications are not implemented much in the secondary schools. The granting of a credit is based on the achievement of the core expectations in each course. In many cases, the need for modifications jeopardizes the integrity of a credit. Most students at the secondary level receive accommodations in their program, or opt for a different level of instruction if they are unable to achieve the expectations in a specific level of instruction. In the elementary program, students move through the grades and may receive modifications for the curriculum expectations based on the overall grade expectations; this does not occur in secondary schools.

Staff Hiring

There has been a teacher hired by the Teaching and Learning department for the Co-op Ed program for students with special needs.

District Reviews

Last year, Superintendent Annie Appleby was not happy with the regular District Review to be used with the small congregated sites. She took the initiative to develop a small committee to develop mini – professional learning sessions to come up with good criteria and appreciation for the type of programming that is happening in these schools. She has now developed an addendum that will be used in addition to the regular process so that the unique learning needs and progress of these students can be better addressed.