Approved Minutes

**Name of Committee:** Special Education Advisory Committee

**Meeting Date:** December 11, 2023from 7:20 p.m.– 9:31 p.m. (Hybrid)

**Chair:** Richard Carter replacing Jean-Paul Ngana in his absence

**Vice-Chair:** Michelle Aarts

A meeting of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee convened on December 11, 2023, from 7:20 p.m. to 9:31 p.m. at 5050 Yonge Street, with Richard Carter presiding.

**Attendance:**

**Members**:

Melissa Rosen Association for Bright Children (ABC)

Leo Lagnado Autism Society of Ontario (Toronto Chapter)

Richard Carter Down Syndrome Association of Toronto (DSAT)

Aliza Chaqpar Easter Seals Ontario

Steven Lynette Epilepsy Toronto

Nora Green Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community

Diane Montgomery (Alternate) Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community

Guilia Barbuto Learning Disabilities Association Toronto District

Aline Chan (Alternate), Community Living

David Lepofsky Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

Dana Chapman (Alternate) Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

Bronwen Alsop VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Stephany Ragany (Alternate) VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Beth Dangerfield CADDAC – Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada

Nerissa Hutchinson Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Trustee Michelle Aarts (Ward 16) – Vice Chair

Saira Chhibber (LC1)

Jordan Glass (LC2)

Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof (LC4)

Jana Girdauskas (LC4)

Stephanie Ragany

Trustee Zakir Patel (Ward 19)

**Regrets**

Jean-Paul Ngana

Trustee Liban Hassan (Ward 6)

Kirsten Doyle (LC3)

Julie Diamond Autism Society of Ontario (Toronto Chapter)

**Staff**

Louise Sirisko, Associate Director, Innovation and Equitable Outcomes

Nandy Palmer, System Superintendent, Special Education and Inclusion

Craig Snider, Executive Officer

Garry Green, Senior Manager,

Kevin Hodgkinson, General Manager, Toronto Student Transportation

Alison Board, Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Effie Stathopoulos, Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Katia Palumbo. Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Andrea Roach, Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Wendy Terro, Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Mun Shu Wong (Audio/Video); Erin Pallet (Audio/Video Assistant)

Elizabeth Chalmers, Administrative Liaison (SOE)

Lianne Dixon. TDSB SEAC Liaison

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|  | Item | Discussion | Action Items/Recommendation |
|  | Land Acknowledgement | Chair/Vice Chair | The Vice Chair read the land acknowledgment. |
|  | Approval of Agenda | There was a request to move the K-12 Update earlier on the agenda. Agenda was amended.. | Moved to approve amended agenda by Melissa Rosen  Secinded by Richard Carter  Approved |
|  | Conflicts of interest  Approval of Minutes from November SEAC Meeting  Action Log | The Chair asked Members if there were any conflicts of interest to be declared | No conflicts of interest were declared  Moved to approve by Melissa Rosen  Seconded by Leo Lagnado  No additions to the Action Log - approved |
|  | Transportation Presentation  Garry Green and Kevin Hodgkinson | Transportation Department   * A consortium of TDSB and TCDSB jointly operates transportation with the TCDSB * Each special education student is treated individually concerning transportation needs and their transportation is prioritized. * Transportation is optimized each summer given the changing needs of students, program hours and physical or other accommodations. * If more than 10km distance there is a discussion with the Special Education department and the transportation department to discuss the unique needs of the student * School start-up – scheduling of bussing takes 10 business days to finalize student's bussing and improves to 72 hours for the rest of the school year. * The department uses transportation software and encourages parents to access the Transportation portal. * In 2024, tablets will be on all buses so that drivers can improve their route tracking * Carriers/bus drivers have their first aid certificate but are not specifically qualified for Seizures – Drivers are instructed to contact emergency services * Software –The software is functional but researching better options * Drivers are made aware of the safety plan for each student based on the information parents have provided to the carrier. * We transport nurses, educational assistants, on these vehicles. They are paid through the school board. There is no backlog related to travel assistants * The Transportation Plan, as required by AODA, will be provided by the Special Education Department and Transportation Department working together..   SEAC members are encouraged to send any additional questions to share with the Transportation Department |  |
|  | Budget Presentation  Craig Snider | Craig Snider shared a presentation with SEAC members   * + January 18, 2024 – FBEC will present Revised Estimates – consolidated version of the financial bottom line from 22-23   + January 29, 2024 – Special FBEC – 3-year enrolment trend, will present 1st quarter results and the 24-25 Financial forecast.   + February 14 - FBEC - option to present to trustees a balanced budget - this is the year that we have to present a balanced budget   + Special FBEC – March 4 School-based staffing which is 65-66% of the budget; March 26 – Operating budget to the Board for approval – we balance the budget in the advancement of the GSNs   + Capital Budget is set in May/June   + Deficit is incorporated in the operating budget for the Special education department.   + Opportunities from SEAC to help with budget can be provided via online surveys, and webinars, send your thoughts to the FBEC Committee. You can present what your priorities are for the next fiscal year for the Board to take into consideration   + Special education department is in constant communication with the budget department and trustees on SEAC will take information to FBEC   + TDSB is on a deficit recovery plan. The Ministry expects Special education to reduce expenditures by 5 million this year   + We are having reduced numbers in Special education services provided   Special Education Funding Information Link shared with SEAC members |  |
|  | Leadership Report  Developing and Action Plan  Louise Sirisko/Nandy Palmerill | System Superintendent Nandy Palmer shared information regarding:   * + · PAAC on SEAC Calendar   + · TDSB Suspensions Over Time by Exceptionality   + · Virtual Special Education and Inclusion Information Sessions   + · IPRC data for November 2023.   + Videos are being created for parent engagement sessions.   Associate Director Louise Sirisko addressed concerns raised by members of the public regarding comments made at the last SEAC meeting regarding race and special education.  Members of the Equity Team are preparing learning for all SEAC members and staff around intersectionality and students with special education needs. | System Superintendent Nandy Palmer will go back to the research department: regarding concerns about exceptionalities data if there is more than one exceptionality.  A concern was raised around the substantial differences in the proportion of assessments across learning centers – specifically the number of gifted versus comprehensive assessments. Staff will follow up. |
|  | Trustees Report | Ministry doing pre-survey consultation. Lianne Dixon has sent the link to SEAC members | SEAC members are asked to please complete the survey and share the link widely with the community. |
|  | Round Table | Working Groups  ● K-12 Working Group  Ø The group has connected with school board staff  Ø Recommended that we need a new communication plan  Ø SEAC Members please provide your input  Ø The recommendation was made that it should be K to 21 not K to 12 – staff will clarify to include all students – K-21  Ø Concern was raised that the Special Education website is buried in the TDSB website and that there is too much text and not accessible. Should be more visible.  Special Education Plan Working Group   * The Working Group takes feedback and where it can be, incorporates it into the plan. * We encourage anybody in the community to provide feedback through the link provided throughout the plan * Asking for feedback on Sections F, G, and H   Terms of Reference Working Group – need members. Please email Liaison if you are interested in participating.  Association Updates  Autism Ontario (distributed)  Easter Seals (distributed) |  |
|  | Other Business  Adjournment  **Next meeting**  January 15, 2023  Election of Chair/Vice Chair will take place at the beginning of the meeting.    Motion to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Melissa Rosen approved and seconded by Richard Carter at 9;31 p.m. | System Superintendent Nandy Palmer and Associate Director Louise Sirisko will chair the meeting until the election takes place. |  |