TDSB logo


Approved Minutes

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

**Meeting Date: February 13, 2023**

via Zoom and In-Person

Chair: Jean-Paul Ngana; Vice-Chair: Michelle Aarts

7:00 – 9:12 pm

Attendance:

A meeting of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee convened on February 13, 2023 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at 5050 Yonge Street, with Jean-Paul Ngana presiding.

Attendance: Jean Paul Ngana, (Co-Chair), Trustee Michelle Aarts (Co-Chair), Trustee Liban Hassan, Melissa Rosen, Julie Diamond, Leo Lagnado, Richard Carter, Tracey O'Regan, Aline Chan, Aliza Chaqpar, Nora Green, Diane Montgomery, Guilia Barbuto, Dana Chapman, Saira Chhibber. Jordan Glass, Kirsten Doyle, Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof, Jana Girdauskas

Regrets: Trustee Zakir Patel, Adebukola Adenowo-Akpan, Steven Lynette, Hilary Quinn, David Lepofsky, Shanna Lino, Bronwen Alsop, Judi Coulson, Beth Dangerfield, Lianne Dixon, Nerissa Hutchinson, Elie Ngoy

Staff in Attendance:  Nandy Palmer, Audley Salmon, Wendy Terro, Effie Stathopoulos, Alison Board, Andrea Roach, Craig Snider, Elizabeth Schaeffer, Katia Palumbo, Susan Moulton, Elizabeth Chalmers, Mun Shu Wong, Erin Pallett

Regrets:

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| Item | Discussion | Action Items/Recommendation |
| Call to Order - Quorum | Chair  Chair brought attention to an additional column on the agenda to track what type of item it is and what action needs to be taken. | Quorum achieved |
| Land Acknowledgement | The Chair asked for a volunteer to read the Land Acknowledgement | The Vice-Chair volunteered and read the Land Acknowledgement Read |
| Approval of Agenda | The Chair asked Members if there were any new items to be added to the agenda.  Parents as Partners to be added to the agenda as well as Association update from Down Syndrome Association.  Nora Green requested to bring a motion forward.  An Action Log will be shared after the meeting to make sure that no items are missed. | On Motion by Richard Carter, the agenda was approved.  Seconded by Aline Chan |
| Approval of Minutes from SEAC Meeting January 2023 | Minutes were adjusted to include question from Richard Carter about his request for information on the Special Education Allowance/Supplement. | On Motion by Aline Chan, the Minutes of January 2023 as amended were approved.  Seconded by Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof |
| Conflicts of interest | The Chair asked Members if there were any conflicts of interest to be declared | No Conflicts of Interest were declared |
| Budget Presentation – Craig Snider | Budget consultation concludes February 14th and will go to FBEC next week.  40.4 million dollar deficit for this school year  For next year, there is a slight decline in enrolment, and pandemic funding will be gone at the end of this year.  Permit revenue and international student revenue is slowly increasing, along with childcare revenue.  There will be an overall decline in revenues of 23.2 million primarily due to pandemic funding.  On the expenditure side, staffing cost increase expected of 35 million dollars.  Projected decrease in insurance costs,  7 million dollar increase in utilities and increases in safety measures.  12.2 million dollars from investments due to high interest rates  Total projected deficit of 61 million dollars for 2023/23 school year  Grants will be announced in March and budget planning documents will be adjusted.  Reserves have been extinguished over the past few years.  Report is available online.  Question about school budget allocation of supplement for special education is about 431 000 dollars. That is part of the general expenditures of the board and is part of the special education enveloping allocation.  This money is for supplies and for supporting special education programs in the schools. The principal, along with school council and staff, determine how the budget is spent.  Question was asked about whether Special Education can be a budget driver.  It was clarified that in the financial facts document, the cost per pupil includes facility costs as well as staffing costs, not a special education budget. | **Action Item:**  For future budget presentations, it was requested that a presentation document be provided so that members can read it ahead and also be able to look at it on the screen.  **Action Item:**  Craig Snider was asked to share the background material as well as financial facts discussed with SEAC tonight. Craig committed to answer questions that are sent to him. These will be sent out to SEAC by the end of the week. |
| Road Map  Working Group Updates | **Autism Ontario Presentation**  Brief overview of autism and the criteria of diagnosis was provided.  Key Points from Mapping Exercise:  Some accommodations that can really help with autistic students are: consistent supply teachers, visual timetable, separate room for testing, sensory room, staggered lunches/class changes, quieter bell, non-scent schools, etc.  The accommodations need to be customized to the child’s needs. Not all students need or want all accommodations. The family knows the child best, and knows what the triggers are. Working closely with the family is critical. Professional development is essential for teachers, EA’s and lunchroom staff.  A whole school understanding of neurodiversity is important – students as well as staff.  Special Education Working Group  This working group has completed one part of its feedback review and input, and will be sharing the document with staff after it is finalized. It will also be shared with SEAC. The next phase of review will be starting shortly.  Motion:  A motion was brought forward by Nora Green to address the fact that Trustees will soon be voting on the budget and need to be critically aware of what is happening in special education.  Clarification was sought by staff as the purpose of the data – is it for SEAC or is it for Trustees. Much of this data is not readily available, and must be requested from schools. Accessing this information will require a significant amount of time, and some may not be available at all as some of the data is not collected. Staff can provide data that they have access to. March SEAC meeting will not be sufficient time for a portion of the request. Staff is committed to collect and provide what it can. It was suggested that a way to get the message to trustees would be to write “considerations” for them to take into consideration when making budget decisions.  Response was provided that some data can be left blank if it is not available readily. If the data is not being collected, it was suggested that it start to be collected.  Working Groups  It was decided that the mandate distributed last week with the addition of Parents/Caregivers as Partners Workshop is approved and no longer in draft format.  Members can sign up for any working groups.  Judi Coulson and Shanna Lino were recognized as their contributions to SEAC working groups. Both members have resigned. | **Action Item:**  Autism presentation will be sent out to all SEAC members due to difficulties with projection during the meeting. (Appendix A)  **Action Item:**  Discussion follow up to the Autism mapping exercise.  **Motion** (Appendix B) was brought forward by Nora Green.  The motion was moved by Nora Green, seconded by Melissa Rosen.  The motion passed.  .  **Action Item:**  List of staff with different positions/job descriptions was requested to be shared with SEAC |
| Association Updates | March 21, 2023 is World Down Syndrome Day. The Down Syndrome Association of Ontario has produced a transitions guide that all members are recommended to look at.  http://www.schooltransitions.ca/en/ |  |
| Leadership Report | **TDSB and The Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read Inquiry** **Report**  During the 2022 school year, The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released its report Right to Read: Public inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities. The report has detailed findings and recommendations for many stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, school boards, and faculties of education. The TDSB multi-disciplinary team has reviewed the report and has provided feedback to the Ministry of Education. In Spring 2022, the Ministry of Education released Effective Early Reading Instruction: A Teacher’s Guide as an initial response to the OHRC’s Right to Read report. This resource has been shared with all staff and a number of steps have been taken and are underway, to support the implementation of this resource.  Special Education and Inclusion is working collaboratively with the Literacy Department to support professional learning for elementary and secondary teachers on Tier 2 & 3 reading interventions for students.  Clarification was sought about what screeners will be used, and how information is shared with parents. The question will be brought back to the Early Years Department for further information.  **Parent Engagement Sessions - Part 2**  Special Education and Inclusion will be offering a second parent/guardian/ caregiver session on Tuesday, February 28 & Wednesday, March 1.  This session will focus on supporting IPRC Reviews and Transitions and will also provide an opportunity for parents/guardians/caregivers to ask questions.  The sessions will be facilitated by Special Education and Inclusion Centrally Assigned Principals and Coordinators and Consultants.  **TDSB Autism Services**  The TDSB Autism Services builds capacity within schools to develop and implement effective programming strategies, based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis, for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Autism Services is a coordinated, multidisciplinary team supporting students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).  The Autism Services team works collaboratively with schools, parents/guardians and community agencies to build capacity, share resources and develop effective programming strategies based on the principles of ABA for students with ASD. Professional learning opportunities are also provided to the system.  All members of Autism Services offer considerable knowledge of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and extensive experience in meeting the needs of students with ASD in a variety of classroom settings. The multidisciplinary team consists of Teacher Consultants, Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational  Therapists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Child and Youth Counselors, ABA Facilitators/Board Certified Behaviour Analysts and Training Assistants.  **Guide to Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)**  We are pleased to share the new Guide to Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers. This guide, along with the previously shared IEP Guide for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers, can be found on the Special Education website or in the following links: Guide to Identification, Placement and Review Committee for Parents/Guardians/Caregivers.  **IPRC statistics for January**  LC1 109  LC2 50  LC3 38  LC4 100  Total 297 | **Action Item:**  Further information about screeners for K-2 and how parents are informed will be sought from the Early Years Department |
| Trustees Report | Report was shared electronically by Trustee Aarts |  |
| Other Business  Adjournment  Next Meeting: March 20, 2023 | The Chair asked for a motion to extend the meeting for up to 15 min | On Motion by Izabella Pruska-Oldenof, the meeting was extended for up to 15 min.  On Motion by Richard Carter, and seconded by Nora Green, the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm |

Appendix A

[Autismpresentation.pdf](file:///E:\march2023%20seac\Autismpresentation.pdf)

Appendix B

Where as, the board is facing decisions regarding the special education staffing for the 2023-2024 school year,

And it has suggested that the budget for special education will be lower,

And school boards must meet the “duty to accommodate” for students with disabilities,

Be it resolved that the SEAC is requesting a timely report from the TDSB outlining the current level of service delivery being experienced in the Board to Trustees for the March Budget report so as to provide meaningful input into this year’s Budget consultation.  This report should include:

**Academic indicators**

-EQAO performance of TDSB special education students which includes making comparisons to other GTA boards (gifted results separate)

-graduation rates for students with special education needs (gifted results separate)

-post-secondary acceptance rates for special education needs (gifted results separate)

**Safety Indicators**

-the number of students who have had safety plans initiated

-the number of students who access “exclusion rooms”

-the number of work refusals

-the number of health and safety forms filled in by staff

-number of calls to come and get your kid to clean them or calm them

**Consistency of Support**

-the number of times Special Education supports have been pulled to cover other classes

-the number of students on full/partial exclusion from schools - reduced day that isn’t due to therapy

-the number of students with special education needs whose absences are greater than 10 days

-the number of times students are not allowed to join events due to under staffing

-the number of minutes of instruction provided to students who are blind to learn Braille

**Current Staffing Allocations**

-number of Educational assistants

-number of SNAs

-number of special education teachers supporting regular classes

-number of special education teachers supporting ISPs

-number of clinical staff by category

And where information is not available, the item will be listed and an explanation will be provided as to why.