



Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting MINUTES

February 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom

Members Present: Diana Avon, Michelle Brick, Aline Chan, Paul Cross, Clovis Grant, Debra Hayden, Trustee John Hastings, Olga Ingrahm, Trustee Howard Kaplan, Jean-Paul Ngana, Ginny Pearce, Phillip Sargent, Trustee Sam Sotiropoulos, Nancy Turner Wright

Alternates Present: Najia Shafi, Deborah Fletcher, Elaine Dodsworth-Lever, Nora Green, Judy Moir, Yama Arianfar, Heather Breckenridge, Christina Buczek, Richard Carter, Gal Koren, Steven Lynette, Cynthia Sprigings, Sandy Spyropoulos

Regrets:

Staff Present: Cindy Burley, David Johnston, Margo Ratsep, Leola Pon, Chris Broadbent

Guests: Valerie Martin (Learning Disabilities Association – Toronto District)

Recorders: John Manalo (Parent and Community Engagement) and Margo Ratsep

Item	Business
1.	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2014 in the Boardroom, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario with Chair Michelle Brick presiding.</p>
2.	<p>Approval of the Agenda</p> <p>***Motion: Ginny Pearce moved that the Agenda be approved. The motion carried.</p>
3.	<p>Declarations of Possible Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were raised.</p>
4.	<p>Confirmation of Minutes of January 13, 2013</p> <p>***Motion: Paul Cross moved that the Minutes of January 13, 2013 be approved with amendments. The motion carried.</p>
5.	<p>Membership Update</p> <p>Michelle Brick gave a synopsis of membership vacancies: 2 Association and 1 Community Alternate Representative. Margo Ratsep reviewed the history of the vacancies. SEAC Membership renewal is reviewed and approved at the Board level. SEAC has sought direction from the Board on replacement of two (2) Association memberships.</p> <p>***Action: Staff will wait for direction from the Board regarding current member replacement and the upcoming renewal process for the 2014-2018 term.</p>
6.	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Leola Pon, Manager TDSB Employee Relations and Chris Broadbent, Manager, Occupational Health and Safety gave a presentation on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)</p> <p>A TDSB AODA Working Group will review relevant TDSB policies. A representative from SEAC will be invited to join the Working Group.</p>
7.	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Valerie Martin, Executive Director of the Learning Disabilities Association – Toronto</p>

	District (LDATD) gave a presentation about the work of the association and responded to questions.
8.	<p>Open Discussion and Input</p> <p>1. Development of an LD Spectrum for Parent/Guardian Reference SEAC discussed the need for easy to understand information about the full spectrum of Learning Disabilities, so parents can have a more clear understanding of the range and nature of learning disabilities and helpful interventions.</p> <p>*** Undertaking: David Johnston suggested that a presentation to SEAC by TDSB Chiefs of Psychology, would demonstrate the work they have been doing to simplify language to better explain the needs of students with Learning Disabilities to parents and staff. SEAC members expressed interest in such a presentation.</p> <p>2. Gathering Statistics by SEAC representatives SEAC discussed the need for members to carry out data collection, in order to better understand trends regarding the kinds of questions/concerns their families have around special education in the TDSB. A template for this kind of data collection was distributed.</p> <p>*** Action: Members are to review the template and send suggested changes/additions to Community Alternate Nora Green, for review at the March meeting. Trustees indicated a wish to take the final template forward to Board member for similar data collection.</p>
9.	<p>System Superintendent's Report</p> <p>Cindy Burley responded to SEAC's January request for information about the alignment of evidence-based strategies from TDSB Research Reports and staff allocation drivers. (See page 4)</p>
10.	<p>Executive Superintendent's Report</p> <p>Sandy Spyropoulos was detained at another meeting. In her absence SEAC received the list of items that will be included in her full report and the IEP Development Update handout. (See pages 5 to 6)</p>
11.	<p>Professional Support Services Report</p> <p>SEAC received a report from David Johnston, Senior Manager for inclusion in the minutes. (See pages 7 to 8)</p> <p>Cindy Burley informed SEAC that David Johnston will be retiring from the TDSB at the end of February, 2014. On behalf of the Special Education Department, she thanked him for his many contributions to the TDSB and in particular for his dedication to meeting the needs of our exceptional learners.</p> <p>SEAC members thanked David for his work with SEAC and extended best wishes to him in all his future endeavours.</p>
12.	<p>Trustee Reports and Follow-up on Previous Action Items</p> <p>In response to questions about staff allocation, Trustee Kaplan reported that the Board is engaging in the Budget consultation process. SEAC members were invited to attend the budget consultation sessions at the various Education Centres and Ward meetings.</p> <p>*** Staff Undertaking: Cindy Burley will invite TDSB Comptroller Craig Snider to</p>

	attend the March meeting, as part of the Board's budget consultation process.
13.	<p>Correspondence Received by the Chair</p> <p>SEAC received the following correspondence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Email dated January 31, 2014 from Toronto Family Network regarding previous correspondence 2. Email dated January 30, 2014 from Irene Rinaldo on behalf of the TDSB Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) re: inviting a SEAC representative to the Annual School Council Appreciation and Information Evening on Thursday, February 20, 2014 at Montecassino Banquet Hall from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
14.	<p>New Business</p> <p>No new business was put forward.</p>
15.	<p>Agenda Setting for Future Meetings</p> <p>SEAC Representatives were invited to select a preferred SEAC meeting date for presenting information about their representative groups.</p> <p>The following topics will be added to the March meeting agenda::</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Living presentation (Clovis Grant) 2. Budget Consultation (Craig Snider) 3. PIAC/SEAC Working Relationship (Jean-Paul Ngana) <p>***Action: Members are asked to inform Margo Ratsep regarding preferred meeting dates for their Association presentations.</p>
16.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>***Motion: Trustee Kaplan moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.</p>

**Staff Undertaking for SEAC
Re: Evidence-based Strategies and
Drivers for Special Education Staff Allocation**

**Submitted by Cindy Burley, System Superintendent
February 3, 2014**

The ***Research Reports on Special Education Needs in the TDSB: A Summary*** references the following evidence-based strategies that impact on service delivery:

- removing systems of categorization
- reducing or eliminating congregated classrooms or ability groupings
- moving from a direct service to indirect service delivery model
- implementing an Instructional Consultation Team or School-Based Student Services Teams

The undertaking requested staff to consider the possibility of incorporating these strategies into the Drivers for Special Education Staff Allocation for the 2014-15 school year. The strategies would require significant system change that would have to be implemented well beyond the scope of the Staff Allocation process. Discussion of these strategies will play a significant role in the move toward inclusion.

Special Education Advisory Committee Executive Superintendent's Report February 3, 2014

Director's Update

TDSB Launches Mental Health Strategy – January 28, 2014

On January 28, 2014 the Toronto District School Board launched a four– year Strategic Plan for Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being. The goal of this strategy is to create a culture where mental health and well-being is integrated into every aspect of a student's school experience.

The plan titled, **Healthy Schools. Healthy Relationships. Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being** has five key commitments:

- 100% of school staff will receive professional development and training on the foundations of mental health;
- All schools will establish "Mental Health Teams" that will be responsible for facilitating student mental health and well-being in their schools;
- Increase by 50% the number of secondary schools engaged in anti-stigma initiatives by June 2014;
- Expand and strengthen mental health partnerships to better meet system needs by enhancing supports for students and staff; and
- Enhance parental engagement and on-going communication between home and school.

This is a part of the TDSB's commitment to increasing student achievement as recently announced in the [Years of Action 2013-2017](#) plan.

For more information please visit: www.tdsb.on.ca/mentalhealth

IEP Development Update

As of January 30, 2014, there were **48,204** IEPs in progress across the TDSB. As you know, our web-based application provides the opportunity for us to generate reports to monitor the status of IEP development both at the school level and centrally.

Of these **48,204** IEPs that have been developed:

30,629 are for male students and **17,575** are for female students. This is consistent with percentages reported at this time last year – 64% male and 36% female.

Approximately **45% (21,601)** of students with IEPs are exceptional and **55% (25,603)** do not have an exceptionality.

Approximately **63%** of students are supported in the Resource program and **37%** in HSP and ISP classes.

Of those students who are exceptional, **42%** are supported in the Resource program and **58%** are supported in HSP or ISP classes.

Of those students who are not exceptional, **79%** are supported in the Resource program and **18%** are supported in HSP or ISP classes.

Grade level distribution shows that the greatest numbers of IEPs are for students in grade **12 (5,963)**, **grade 8 (4,519)**, **grade 5 (4,414)**, **grade 7 (4,357)** and **grade 6 (4,321)**.
The lowest numbers are for students in **Kindergarten (1,043)** and **grade 1 (1,172)**.

Staff Changes

Please join me in congratulating Dr. David Johnston, Senior Manager – Professional Support Services who will be retiring on February 28, 2014 after a successful career at the TDSB, which spanned over 30 years.

Dave's dedicated leadership and enormous contributions as a school Social Worker, Chief of Social Work and Attendance Services and more recently as Senior Manager of Professional Support Services have resulted in significant changes in the delivery of supports and services for students, families and staff across the system. His commitment has impacted the lives of countless students and staff over the years.

We wish Dave continued success in all his future endeavours. He will be missed!

Parent Academy Conference by Parents for Parents – Saturday, April 5, 2014

On Saturday, April 5, 2014 between 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Model Schools for Inner Cities is hosting a Parent Academy Conference by Parents for Parents. The conference is being held at two locations: East – Cedarbrae C.I. at 550 Markham Road; West – Thistletown C.I. at 20 Fordwich Crescent.

Registration is now open at www.tdsb.on.ca/modelschools.

For more information please contact modelschools@tdsb.on.ca or 416-395-6742.

Farewell

It has been an honour and a privilege serving as the Executive Superintendent of Special Education, Section Programs and Student Support Services this past year and a half. I have been blessed to work with a talented, dedicated and passionate team of educators who work together tirelessly to serve the needs of our exceptional students. Effective February 7, 2014, I will be moving to a new role as Executive Superintendent of Student Support Services and Care. Please join me in welcoming Uton Robinson, Executive Superintendent of Special Education and Section Programs, Anne Seymour, Coordinating Superintendent of Special Education and Section Programs and Radmila Iozzo, Executive Assistant of Special Education and Section Programs. Until our paths cross again...

SEAC Report
Professional Support Services
February 3, 2014

Priming Children for Success

Professional Support Services continue to identify and work on initiatives that align with the focus for this year on Priming Children for Success. This involves: supporting the whole child; a focus on identifying and using the strengths of children, families and schools; developing capacity within students, families and schools; identifying supports and resources that children need to be successful; and, creating environments and conditions that allow children to be successful at school and in life.

During the past month, the Chiefs of different services have met with other staff groups to talk about their services and to find common issues that they can work on together.

For example, Speech-Language Pathologists are developing Tier One interventions (a focus on all students) that enhance literacy development for everyone in a classroom, and Social Work and Attendance embedded this message in all of their recent trainings on Child Abuse and Neglect, Mental Health and Bullying.

Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being

To support the implementation of the recent launch of the Children and Youth Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy, Professional Support Services staff will be in-serviced with specific information to increase their knowledge as they participate on School Support Teams, and as they may be involved with the Mental Health Teams that will be established in each school.

The two Mental Health Social Workers Training and Promotion are completing a “Foundations of Mental Health” course which will be available on-line for all TDSB employees, and are developing additional training modules on Anxiety, Depression, Non-Suicidal Self-Injury, and Suicide.

An inter-disciplinary team in PSS is developing a training protocol for school staff in “Suicide Education and Awareness Training”. An additional protocol, “Suicide Intervention Training” is being developed for staff who work directly with students who are evidencing suicidal behaviour.

Celebration Zone

Nancy Marshall, Child and Youth Worker at Weston C.I. is the recipient of the Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award this year. The award will be presented on February 19th. Nancy was nominated for her extensive volunteer work and commitment to community activities. The Governor General’s Caring Canadian Award recognizes individuals who volunteer their time to help others and to build a smarter and more caring nation. The award also highlights the fine example set by these volunteers, whose compassion and engagement are so much a part of our Canadian character.

Service Statistics January 2014

	Psych.	Social Work	Attend.	SLP	OT/PT	Child & Youth Services
Referrals	6406	4908	1327	4271	1026	864
Completed	3461	80	158	1865	246	64
Wait List	1891	161	74	1063	87	1
In Progress	913	4828	1169	1222	889	799

