



# Halton District School Board

**HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Special Education Advisory Committee**  
(Virtual Meeting)  
Tuesday, April 7, 2020, 7pm

## MINUTES

- Present:** Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Alison Brindle (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Diane Vandebossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); James Baldwin (Member at Large); Margo Shuttleworth (Trustee); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Heather Gerrits (Trustee); Diane Miller (Member at Large); Lucille Morris (Member at Large); Tracey Ehl Harrison (Trustee); Deirdre Woo (Association for Bright Children)
- Staff:** Mark Zonneveld (Superintendent); Sean Marks (Principal of Special Education); Lorna Goodrow (Administrator)
- Regrets:** Mike Brown (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Lisa Cameron (Autism Ontario); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Society); Judy Shiels (Voice); Hetal Shah (Association of Bright Children)
- Guest(s):** Stuart Miller (Director of Education)

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### **1.0 Opening**

#### **1.1 Welcome and Call to Order**

L. Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

#### **1.2 Honouring the Land and Territory**

L. Morris read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

#### **1.3 Approval of Agenda**

#148-20 D. Vandebossche and D. Miller

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approved the agenda for April 7, 2020.

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **1.4 Minutes of March 3, 2020**

#149-20 J. Baldwin and A. Brindle

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for March 3, 2020 be approved.

**Carried Unanimously**

## **2.0 Action**

2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 M. Zonneveld updated the SEAC members on the Halton District School Board's learning and support that is being instituted during the COVID-19 Pandemic. He confirmed that April 6, 2020 was the first instructional day of e-learning for all Halton District School Board students. At this point, M. Zonneveld reviewed with SEAC members his Superintendent's Report. Several SEAC members had questions throughout this review and M. Zonneveld addressed these questions as they arose. Director S. Miller joined the teleconference during this review and thanked SEAC for all of their support during this time. We want to be part of the solution for all of our special needs students. Please continue to stay in touch with M. Zonneveld and S. Marks and please let them know what it is you are hearing so our Board can improve/change anything that may be required.

2.4 A motion was made by J. Oliver for all members to vote on continuing to conduct our SEAC meetings at 7:00 pm. A vote was held during this meeting and it was unanimously agreed upon. **This vote was carried.**

## **3.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period**

3.1 H. Gerrits wanted to thank all staff and administration at the Halton District School Board for everything they have done and are continuing to do during this time. D. Woo asked about registrations for the upcoming school year. M. Zonneveld responded that this is a work in progress at the moment but that parents are able to contact their school via the school's websites. J. Baldwin asked if we could have a visual meeting next month (perhaps Zoom?) M. Zonneveld said this can be looked into further.

## **4.0 Communication to SEAC**

### **4.1 Superintendent's Report – April 7, 2020**

#### **1. Student Services Supports during Pandemic School Closure**

The staff in Student Services have pulled together online resources and developed strategies for educators to meet the needs of students with special needs. What follows are updates in a variety of areas for where we are right now, with more resources and ongoing support provided over the coming weeks.

#### **Academic Resources**

Resources are geared towards supporting staff as they plan lessons for students and are considering the necessary accommodations for their students. These will be updated regularly based on feedback to meet the needs of students as they arise. In addition, a new Twitter account has been created to provide daily suggestions for staff and parents.

[@HDSBstudentservices](https://twitter.com/HDSBstudentservices)

Resources are organized to support teachers generally in accommodating and modifying for students with special needs. There are also specific targeted supports that include appropriate content and resources for specific exceptionalities and needs. All of our content is available for staff to access as needed on myHDSB.

## Parent Resources

Our primary means for supporting parents will be through supporting staff and responding to their requests. In addition, we will be sharing, through Twitter and an HDSB.ca link, resources that are practical for our parents at home. Staff can also share resources from our myHDSB site that they feel may benefit parents.

## Assistive Technology and Mobility Devices

Many students took home their AT devices before March Break, while many other devices remained in schools. Administrators, SERTs and other staff connected with families to determine which technology and mobility devices are needed to support students learning at home. These were organized last week for family curbside pick up on Monday. IT Dept staff are also working with our local internet service providers to find solutions to ensure that every student in Halton has internet connectivity, if possible.

## Mental Health Resources

We have a number of resources (tips sheets, information sheets, strategies) for parents, teachers and students, and updated community agency information, in the Mental Health area of myHDSB. Parent information is available at:

[Mental Health and Well-Being Resources for supporting others during COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

## Social Work Services

We are transitioning our previous face to face social work services into a virtual service delivery model. In Phase I of our new virtual service, Social Workers are providing telephone and/or video conferencing services to existing social work clients who were receiving individual or group services before March Break. The service being provided will be different from our typical service. Our PSSP staff engaged in training on how to effectively provide virtual Social Work services. Social Workers will continue to communicate with their school teams and consult, but will not be able to take new referrals in Phase I. We are working on a plan for Phase II, which will encompass a referral process.

## CYC Services

We are transitioning our previous face to face child and youth services into a virtual service delivery model. In Phase I of our new virtual service, Child & Youth Counsellors are providing telephone and/or video conferencing services to students on their existing caseloads who were receiving individual or group services before March Break. The service being provided will be different from our typical service. Our PSSP staff engaged in training on how to effectively provide virtual services. Child & Youth Counsellors will continue to communicate with their school teams and consult, but will not be able to take new referrals in Phase I. We are working on a plan for Phase II, which will encompass a referral process.

## Psychological Services

Each PsychEd Consultant has contacted their Admin/SERT Teams to offer consultative support as appropriate. PsychEd staff may consult on students who have been recently assessed, or on a no-name basis for other students, regarding appropriate accommodations or learning strategies for a student's profile (e.g., strategies around executive functioning, working memory, anxiety, etc.) in the context of virtual learning. PsychEd staff can provide resources and tips sheets to support specific diagnostic categories such as Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism and Intellectual Disabilities. With access to their Psychological Files, PsychEd Consultants will provide feedback to parents and schools regarding recently completed PsychEd Assessments. We are working on ways to virtually assess for specific class placements (eg. Life Skills), if possible.

### Speech and Language Services

We are working to transition some of our current live services into a virtual service delivery model. In Phase I of this virtual service each SLP is contacting the SERTs/teachers of self-contained classes/programs to offer consultative support and coordinated resources/activities that teachers can utilize in their virtual teaching/learning. We are working on ways to virtually assess for specific class placements (KELLP, ELPHA), to provide tele-consulting sessions to parents (primarily for students in KELLP, ELPHA and Communication Programs), and possible tele-intervention sessions and tele-assessments for children on specific waitlists. We are gathering/creating resources to be included in the Student Services link to support students at Tier 1. Students that require Tier 2 and 3 levels of support will have resources sent directly to their families.

### ABA Services

We are working to transition some of our current live services into a virtual service delivery model. In Phase I of our new virtual service, each ABA Facilitator is contacting the SERTs/teachers for students on their existing caseloads who were receiving individual services/consultations before March Break. They will offer consultative support and coordination/provision of resources/activities to support teachers' virtual teaching/learning plans. We will also be gathering/creating resources to be included in the Student Services link for Tier 1 support, and coordinating with other Student Services staff where there is joint support being provided (e.g., SLP, CYC, IPL). We are developing the provision of virtual support for Tier 2 and 3 for students based on their specific student profiles. This will include virtual collaboration with teachers of classes/programs and potentially for tele-consultation with parents to support their learning activities at home.

### SRT and IPRC Processes

We have adjusted our SRT/IPRC/Waiver process to align with our current circumstances. This means we will hold virtual meetings, including parent participation. The processes have been finalized and we are sharing details and instructions with administrators and SERTs.

### Self-Contained Class Placement Processes

The placement process for self-contained classes for the fall is continuing. If parents need a visit to the school and class to finalize their decision then this may be deferred until this is possible.

### Care Treatment Custody and Corrections, and Section 23 classes

Our CTCC programs and Section 23 classes are continuing during the school closures through a virtual teaching and learning model.

### TERT Support

The Tragic Events Response Team will continue to provide support, although it will look different than our past practice. We are currently in the process of redesigning this and will have a new service model ready in the near future.

### Ongoing Support

Schools will continue to engage in the normal problem solving process for students with emerging and complex needs. Communication with parents will be all the more important as they are in many ways the primary educators of their children during the school closure. Student Services will continue to provide updates and to enhance our services during the coming weeks.

## 2. Labour Update

All labour sanctions have been discontinued with the closure of schools. Central agreements have been reached with our caretakers, EAs, ECEs and elementary teachers. OSSTF, which represents secretaries, professional services staff and secondary teachers, have just begun negotiating again with the government and school boards at the provincial level.

## 4.2 Association Reports

LDAH reported the following: To support students with learning disabilities and ADHD in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, LDAHH has moved its Orton Gillingham remedial tutoring online and launched a new e-Tutoring program to support school-based learning.

The Orton-Gillingham approach is a highly-specialized remedial program for students with severe learning disabilities who require 1:1 support in the following areas:

- Reading: phonological awareness, sound/symbol recognition, blending, decoding, handwriting, reading fluency and reading comprehension
- Writing: basic grammar, including parts of speech, sentence structure, punctuation, paragraph structure, or
- Mathematics: basic skills in computation, measurement, fractions, use of money, telling time

<https://ldahh.ca/programs-services/instructional-remediation/>

e-Tutoring is an academic content enrichment program to extend the online learning efforts of local schools. This program focuses on the fundamental **concepts** (sometimes known as big ideas in the Ontario education curriculum) in language and mathematics. Our tutors will use information provided by schools (IEPs etc) and various assessment tools to promote engagement and critical thinking on problems that reference grade-specific material. Classes will be taught by an experienced educator. This program is available in small groups or 1:1

<https://ldahh.ca/programs-services/e-tutoring/>

## 4.3 Trustee Reports

M. Shuttleworth reported the following: Trustees continue to meet by teleconference and currently are receiving weekly COVID-19 updates. Items of interest for SEAC would be:

-All field trips special events and large gatherings are cancelled

-Learn at home officially ruled out this week and it is important to recognize our teachers are working hard to create teaching and learning opportunities with a variety of representations, be it online or through work sent home to students

-Schools made available for students equipment to be able to more effectively learn at home.

Yesterday 1500 laptops and other tech devices were available for curbside pick up and students were able to access this equipment.

-Recent government cutbacks on essential services has halted buildings of new schools which impacts Milton, North Oakville and Nelson. We are looking for some further clarity from the government on these builds.

## 4.4 Committee Reports

- PIC – none
- Accessibility Coordinating Committee - none
- Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Steering Committee – none
- Nelson/Robert Bateman HS Integration Steering Committee – none
- Central/Robert Bateman HS IB Program Integration Steering Committee – none

**5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper**

R. Negoi, Superintendent of Business - Budget

**6.0 Adjournment**

6.1 L. Morris adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm .