

HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Special Education Advisory Committee - (Virtual Meeting)
Tuesday, February 8, 2022 @ 7pm
MINUTES

Present: Heather Gerrits (Trustee); Margo Shuttleworth (Trustee); Yalin Gorica (Association for Bright Children); Candice Keem (Community Living Burlington); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Society); Alison Brindle (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Erin Sproule (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children); James Baldwin (Member at Large); Tracey Ehl Harrison (Trustee); Sarah Lansley (Easter Seals Society); Diane Vandenbossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Kathy Turner (VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children); Diane Miller (Member at Large); Jenn Heidstra (Association for Bright Children); Lucille Morris (Member at Large)

Staff: Colette Ruddock (Superintendent); Sean Marks (Principal); Lorna Goodrow (Administrator)

Regrets: Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Rebecca Hurren (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Lisa Cameron (Autism Ontario)

1.0 Opening

1.1 Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Brindle called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

1.2 Honouring the Land and Territory

Chair Brindle read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

1.3 Approval of Agenda

#186-22 Y. Gorica and C. Keem

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approved the agenda for February 8, 2022.

Carried Unanimously

1.4 Minutes of January 4, 2022

#187-22 D. Vandenbossche and J. Baldwin

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for January 4, 2022 be approved.

Carried Unanimously

2.0 Action

2.1 Chair Brindle introduced our guest presenters, Susan Bowman, Barb Kehl and Ameer Mehta from ErinoakKids. They presented on the model for School-Based Rehabilitation Services provided to ErinoakKids. Chair Brindle thanked Susan Bowman, Barb Kehl and Ameer Mehta for their presentation this evening. There was an opportunity for questions after the presentation. The presentation slideshow will be shared with SEAC members.

2.2 Superintendent Ruddock introduced Superintendent Blackwell, Brent Coakwell, Principal, Safe and Healthy Schools and Christine Howard, Manager, Special Education Services. They presented an overview of the proposed changes to PPM 81. There was an opportunity for questions/comments from SEAC. A slideshow on PPM 81 will be shared with SEAC.

There was a fulsome discussion with members on PPM 81. Several members voiced their concerns around the revised provisions of PPM 81 as well as the implementation timeline.

Superintendent Ruddock confirmed that staff will be submitting a letter to the Ministry of Education on the revisions to PPM 81. It was discussed that the Chair of the Board, Trustee Shuttleworth, would also draft a letter to the Ministry on behalf of SEAC regarding the proposed revised provisions to PPM 81.

Chair Brindle, brought forward a motion:

That the HDSB Special Education Advisory Committee send a letter to the Minister of Education opposing the provisions to PPM 81. This motion has been recorded and was passed unanimously.

2.3 Correspondence from Lakehead District School Board

Chair Brindle, brought forward a motion:

That the HDSB Special Education Advisory Committee send a letter to the Minister of Education supporting the Lakehead District's correspondence to the Ministry of Education regarding compensation for education workers and to raise the rate of pay for these essential workers. We ask that the government consider this to be a pressing issue moving into this next round of central negotiations. This motion has been recorded and was passed unanimously

3.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period

S. Lansley commented that she saw the Director's Panel Series on Identity, Inclusion and Human Rights. She would like to suggest that people with disabilities also be included in these discussions. Superintendent Ruddock responded to S. Lansley that Director Ennis has indicated this is the beginning of a series on identity, and that other groups will be included in future sessions. Superintendent Ruddock will share SEAC's feedback on this with Director Ennis.

4.0 Communication to SEAC

4.1 Superintendent's Report

1. We are pleased that schools have resumed in-person learning and staff are continuing to support strong IPAC measures. As protocols have evolved, schools are:
 - a. Verifying staff and student daily screening on the Ontario School Screening Tool;
 - b. Implementing additional PPE for staff and masking requirements for students (e.g., masking during Phys Ed, availability of triple layer masks);
 - c. Providing access to Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT) to return early from a symptomatic absence;
 - d. Monitoring and reporting absence rates

2. Monday was the start to 2nd semester in secondary school and Term 2 in elementary. With the start of a new semester / term and some expressed interest in changing models due to the current COVID situation, we have made every effort to accommodate requests where they have not resulted in a reorganization of classes (elementary) or resectioning of courses (secondary).

3. 2022-23 Budget Process - The planning for the upcoming budget process is underway. A survey will be released in February for public input. Last year, we had Superintendent Negoj come to SEAC for two presentations -the first an overview on the budget process and the second on the draft budget. The training session recorded last year will be provided to SEAC members for those interested in a review and for those who are new to SEAC. Superintendent Negoj will present the draft budget to SEAC in May or June (depending on the release of the timing from the Ministry).

4. Superintendent Ruddock reported that the PPM167 (on-line learning requirements) has been finalized. Our current Grade 10 students are required to take 2 on-line courses throughout their high school years in order to receive their secondary school diploma. In addition to the final version of this PPM, there is an opt-out clause and any parent can opt out of this requirement or any student 18 and over. The Board is currently reviewing this PPM and developing an implementation plan. Superintendent Ruddock also added that because our Grade 9s last year ultimately received almost a whole credit through remote learning due to school closures, they are able to bank 1 of their required credits as a result.

5. Our Student Well-Being Department is hosting a number of sessions on mental health. One in particular is a session on neuro inclusive mental health and ties closely to the students and children that we serve. Please see this [link](#) for more information.

4.2 Association Reports

Chair Brindle reported that the LDAHH 11th Annual Solutions for Learning Conference is open for Early Bird pricing until Feb 14th. This virtual event runs on March 4th and 5th and has 16 expert speakers in the field of learning disabilities, ADHD and mental health. If you would like more information, please go to www.ldahh.ca

4.3 Trustee Reports

1. The 2022-2023 [school year calendar](#) was approved by Trustees on February 2 and now has to be submitted to the Ministry of Education for approval. School starts on September 6. Three Ministry mandated Professional Activity days will likely be devoted to Mathematics, health and safety training for education workers, equity, student well-being, destreaming and gap closing strategies as a result of the pandemic. Four PA days will be focused on Board priorities.
2. The Board also received the 2020-2021 Annual Accessibility [Report](#), with similar information presented as was received by SEAC.
3. 2021-22 Capital Priorities Funding Approval for the **Milton SE #13 PS**, and **Oakville NE #1 HS** have been received. Trustee Gerrits & Trustee Danielli were present for the press conference announcement yesterday.
4. Public input for the naming of Milton #11 has closed and the naming committee will be meeting this week to begin the process.
5. On Monday students and staff finally moved into EMSS in Milton.
6. Director Ennis is hosting a panel series on identity, inclusion and human rights. The first one, released today, named by Rabbi Wise, is called "Anti Semitism: The Longest Hatred". It can be accessed [here](#).
7. Recent advocacy to the Province includes a [letter written on January 7](#), 2022 encouraging vaccine prioritization of education staff and students, and a return to in person learning. This letter was acknowledged by [Premier Ford](#) via e-mail.
8. Trustees have their first budget workshop on February 8. A public survey will be launched shortly, and a SEAC session planned. Next year's budget is again, surrounded with uncertainty. There may be gaps related to the ending of covid-related support, which included additional staff positions as well as supplies.
9. The Halton District School Board is working with the City of Burlington to move forward with next steps in the City's purchase of the former Robert Bateman High School property (5151 New St, Burlington). In [June 2021](#), HDSB trustees approved a plan to relocate the Burlington Gary Allan Learning Centre to Robert Bateman High School, and declare the remainder of the Robert Bateman

High School facility surplus to its needs. In September 2021, the City of Burlington expressed interest to acquire the property and provide the HDSB with a 25-year lease to accommodate [Gary Allan Learning Centre](#), which provides adult, alternative and continuing education programs, and language instruction programs for newcomers, among others.

10. Trustees have had two PD sessions recently - one on Robert's Rules and the other on Governance & Operations.

4.4 Committee Reports

Parent Involvement Committee - none

Accessibility Coordinating Committee - none

Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Steering Committee - none

Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy Steering and Advisory Committee - Y. Gorica reported that the committee met virtually on January 13, 2022. The committee welcomed diverse representatives from the students, teachers, parents, and community organization (ROCK). Trustee Gerrits was also present at the meeting. The committee discussed the primary roles of the committee and shared information of mental health programs that are currently piloting in schools. Feedback from different representatives was provided. There is more information on the mental health programs posted on the Board's website. The following sessions are planned and will be presented virtually to the HDSB parent community in 2022:

- Vaping (February 9)
- Building Executive Function Skills in Teenagers: How Can Parents Help? (April 5)
- Identity, Race, Mental Health and Well-Being (April 27 or 28)
- Supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ Students (May 17)

5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

Literacy programming

6.0 Adjournment

6.1 Chair Brindle adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m.