

Halton District School Board



HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee - (Virtual Meeting)

Tuesday, June 1, 2021, 7pm

MINUTES

Present: Alison Brindle (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Rebecca Hurren (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Margo Shuttleworth (Trustee); Lucille Morris (Member at Large); Tracey Ehl Harrison (Trustee); Diane Miller (Member at Large); Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Yalin Gorica (Association for Bright Children); Diane Vandebossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Sarah Lansley (Easter Seals Society); Candice Keem (Community Living Burlington); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Society); James Baldwin (Member at Large); Jenn Heidstra (Association for Bright Children)

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

Regrets: Lisa Cameron (Autism Ontario); Heather Gerrits (Trustee); Voice (representative TBD)

Guests: R. Negoj, Superintendent, Business Services

1.0 Opening

1.1 Welcome and Call to Order

A. Brindle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Honouring the Land and Territory

A. Brindle read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

1.3 Approval of Agenda

#174-21 J. Baldwin and L. Morris

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approved the agenda for June 1, 2021.

Carried Unanimously

1.4 Minutes of May 4, 2021, 2021

At this point, before the motion to approve the May minutes were carried, the representative of Association of Bright Children (ABC), Y. Gorica, indicated that her name was mis-spelled. This error was amended and an updated copy of the draft May minutes were shared with members during the June SEAC meeting. As well, ABC indicated that they would like to withdraw their support in favour of approving the Special Education Plan during May's SEAC meeting. This non-approval is now

recorded during the June 1, 2021 SEAC meeting. ABC at this point, shared their Minority Report and once it is submitted to the Board, it will be added as an appendix into the Special Education Plan.

#175-21 D. Vandebossche and T. Ehl Harrison

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for May 4, 2021 now be approved.

Carried Unanimously

2.0 Action

2.1 A presentation on the Board's budget was made by R. Negoj, Superintendent of Business Services. There was an opportunity for a Q&A after the presentation was made.

3.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period

There was a discussion and interest regarding the new Student Well-Being Department. SEAC has requested that the new Superintendent, once appointed, present at a SEAC meeting in the fall of 2021 with an update.

At this point S. Miller joined the meeting to thank all SEAC members for their work they do for the Board. The Board appreciates your honesty and transparency over the years. A. Brindle thanked Director Miller on behalf of all SEAC members for his support on SEAC and to enjoy his "next chapter".

Y. Gorica suggested if budget funds could be allocated to develop a manual for the SEAC Committee on SEACs policies and by-laws. C. Ruddock thanked Y. Gorica for the suggestion. We could definitely look at an onboarding package that is self directed so members can learn about SEACs policies and by-laws. J. Baldin suggested a google site or guide of some sort and is willing to assist in developing this.

4.0 Communication to SEAC

4.1 Superintendent's Report - June 1, 2021

1. **Red shirt day for Easter Seals** - This week is National AccessAbility Week to promote awareness about accessibility and inclusion - tomorrow is Red Shirt day for Easter Seals. For more information - see [Easter Seals](#) website.
2. **Summer Learning** - In addition to the Summer School offerings through Gary Allan, Special Education Services has a range of offerings for students with special education needs.

1. Assistive Technology

AT Summer School (Grades 3-8): This program will build independence in leveraging Assistive Technology software to access the curriculum. Participants will engage in activities to gain proficiency in the use of the Google Suite (Drive, Docs, Slides) and extensions (Read & Write, Equat10, PDF Reader) with a focus on communication, planning, and organization.

End of Summer AT Crash Course - August 30th -September 2nd Only (Grades 3-12): This program will provide a condensed review of Assistive Technology software available to students. Participants will engage in activities to gain proficiency in the use of Google extensions (Read & Write, Equat10, PDF Reader) with a focus on communication, planning, and organization.

2. Autism

Preparing for Kindergarten (Grades JK/SK): This course is intended to introduce students diagnosed with Autism to the routines and expectations of the Kindergarten Program. This course will provide students with opportunities to further develop in the areas of learning routines and participating in structured play opportunities as well as being introduced to the use of visual supports. Emphasis will be placed on skills to increase social/emotional coping skills and to help students acclimatize to a Kindergarten setting. The course may include and is not limited to: practicing the key components of a daily schedule and routine (arrival, cubby, circle, free play, washroom/hand hygiene, Nutrition Break, lining up, transitions to and from one setting to another, alerting cues and preparing for home time).

Functional Communication and Language Development (Grades JK-3): Students in the Communication Program This course is intended to engage students currently enrolled in a Communication Program (SK - Grade 3) who have a current IEP from their 2020-2021 academic year. This course will provide students with opportunities to further develop their functional communication skills, and language development. The course will include theme based summer activities (e.g., water play, sports, camping, bugs, cooking), using hands-on learning, music and movement imitation, and turn taking games. This course will focus on functional communication development and learning will be structured around the use of Google Slides and modelling skills during one on one synchronous learning. The format of this course will incorporate both synchronous learning using Google Meet and asynchronous learning using Google Classroom resources. Daily programming would include 2 group sessions running for 1 hour each with a half hour prep period each day. Each hour session would include 4 students at preset time slots.

Peers Training (Grades 7-8): Virtually delivered Program targeting social skills for adolescents with Autism. Ideally includes parent participation.

Peers Program for Teens (secondary): Virtually delivered Social Skills Curriculum targeting Adolescents with Autism.

3. Gifted

Design Thinking: Problem Solving Projects for Gifted Learners (Grades 1-8): Working through the problem solving process with peers with Design Thinking Projects, Design and Maker, Math, coding, and creative writing challenges.

4. Language Impairment

Stories, Crafts and Language, Oh My! (Grades JK-1): This course is targeted towards students who were participants/candidates for KELLP/ELPhA. However, students without a formal diagnosis or IEP may be an appropriate candidate if they have had SLP support/intervention. Children will explore theme based units centered around a book and a related craft/activity. The book will be used to support the development of vocabulary, sequencing, narrative retell, procedural explanations, following directions, inferencing/predicting, question comprehension, phonological awareness and grammar.

5. Learning Disability

LD Structured Reading Booster (Grades 4-8) *ONLY for students who are ALREADY in a Structured Reading Program (with an Itinerant Reading Teacher) in Self-Contained LD classes: Students will develop their base reading skills that they have been working on all year. The Structured Reading Program will focus on 2 main goals: 1. strengthening phonological awareness skills (deleting and changing sounds in words) 2. learning new skills in decoding (reading) All students will have daily, one on one sessions with the teacher that targets their individual goals.

Comprehending Fiction(Grades 4-8): Students with a learning disability in reading comprehension often need to tackle fiction 1 - 2 sentences at a time to start. In this course, the teacher will read age level texts orally to the group and clarify their comprehension by focusing on 3 areas: -Tier 2 vocabulary (words seldom spoken, but often found in literary works) -Grammatical sentence structures used primarily in written texts -The difference between making predictions (I think I know what will happen) and making inferences (I figured it out).

Sentence Formation (Grades 1-8): Students with an LD in writing often struggle with writing grammatical sentences. They might write sentence fragments or run-on sentences instead. In this course, students will use their assistive tech (typing, word prediction, or speech to text) to 'write' sentences - starting with one grammatical sentence and gradually adding on more, one sentence at a time.

Comprehending Fiction (secondary): Students with a learning disability in reading comprehension often need to tackle fiction 1 - 2 sentences at a time to start. In this course, the teacher will read age level texts orally to the group and clarify their comprehension by focusing on 3 areas:

-Tier 2 vocabulary (words seldom spoken, but often found in literary works)

-Grammatical sentence structures used primarily in written texts -The difference between making predictions (I think I know what will happen) and making inferences (I figured it out).

6. Elementary Mild Intellectual Disability/Developmental Disability

Science and Daily Living (Grades 4-8): This course is intended to engage Life Skills students in opportunities to further develop their knowledge of functional science and daily living skills including seasons, weather, plant growth, animal life cycles and the five senses.

Life Skills: Social Skills Grades 4-8: The focus of this program is to practise social skills: greeting friends, sharing information with peers, and responding to information shared by others, participating in group activities, social communication, and playing games with others The program will be a mix of synchronous and asynchronous programming. Each day's activities will be based on a theme (By the Sea, In the Kitchen, In the Air, Music,...) Synchronous activities will be scheduled throughout the day, and will each last for up to 30 minutes. They will include: a morning circle, a read-aloud, dancing/body breaks, a game, 'show-and-share' type activities, snacktime as an opportunity to practise social communication Asynchronous activities will be related to the day's theme, and will be a mix of functional academic goals (colour, shape,...), fine motor skills (drawing, painting, cutting, beading,...) and gross motor skills

(jumping, running, balancing...).

Life Skills: Music and Art (Grades 4-8): The focus of this program is to use art and music as vehicles for developing skills outlined in the Carolina curriculum: cognitive, communication, fine motor, gross motor, interpersonal. The program will be a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous activities. Synchronous activities will be scheduled throughout the day and will last up to 30 minutes each. Every activity will be a music activity (singing, playing, dancing, chanting,...) or an art activity (colouring, drawing, tracing, sculpting,...) Be prepared to get loud and to get messy.

Numeracy Review (Grades 4-8): Students work through various numeracy skills that build on one another, one per day including: counting to 10; counting by 1s and 2s; using a number line; base 10 number systems; counting on; making addition sentences; subitizing; fact triangles; addition and subtraction from 10.

Literacy Review (Grades 4-8): Students will complete literacy activities focusing on phonemic awareness; skills will build on each other as students progress through the lessons. Topics include: the alphabet, words that begin with the letter...; diagraphs; rhyming; alliteration; ending sounds; word games (scrabble, boggle); segmenting words; vowel sounds.

Functional Literacy-Life Skills (Grades 4-8): This course is intended for Life Skills students who are a person with a Mild Intellectual Disability or a Developmental Disability to help further their functional literacy development. All lessons will be tailored for each student's specific IEP, strengths and needs. Focus areas will include but are not limited to: sight words, reading decoding and comprehension, phonemic awareness, ordering and sequencing ideas and events. Students will develop their technology skills and learn more about using Google Suite i.e., Speech to text, listening to the text they have written etc. There will be a balance of reading and writing in this program. This course will include synchronous and asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning will include google meet live video lessons and activities. These live video sessions will be based on student need and will include whole group sessions and one on one and small group lessons. Asynchronous learning activities will be used to reinforce the learning from our live video sessions.

Science and Daily Living (secondary): This course is intended to engage Life Skills and Community Pathways Program students in opportunities to further develop their knowledge of functional science and daily living skills including seasons, weather, plant growth, animal life cycles and the five senses.

Functional Academics (secondary): Literacy/Numeracy Focus on language and communication goals and numbers and numeracy goals Culinary Skills Daily synchronous and asynchronous learning activities focused on using tools in the kitchen and making healthy choices Personal Life Skills Daily synchronous and asynchronous learning activities focused on cause and effect, personal grooming and independent eating skills.

Physical Education and the Arts (secondary): A combination of indoor and outdoor activities to keep students engaged and active Social Skills and Exploring our World Daily synchronous and asynchronous learning to improve social skills by exploring nature and the world around us.

Summer Learning for Students with Vision Loss (Grades 1-12): This program would provide opportunities for students to interact with other students who have vision loss, and to have a safe space to learn and have some fun using games and activities which are accommodated to the students' learning needs.

8. Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Learning American Sign Language - Beginner (Grades 4-12): An opportunity for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students to learn the beginner level of American Sign Language (ASL) skills, Deaf Culture and history. Beginner ASL skills will encompass a basic conversation level with vocabulary for school and home. Students will gain a general understanding of the role of ASL in Deaf people's lives and a broad introduction to the information about the Deaf community.

3. **2021-22 School Year** - Plans are underway for the 2021-22 school year to offer two learning models: in-person and remote. Parents/guardians may select remote learning by completing the registration form (sent via email to all families) by June 1st. Elementary schools will be organized with in-person and remote classes, while secondary students will be transferred to a virtual school.

Elementary Schools will run a regular school day with the return of rotary/ subjects taught by specialists (where applicable), small group instruction opportunities, and experiential or hands-on learning.

Students will take two courses a day, 150 minutes in length each, 5 days a week and both courses in-person (or synchronous for remote learners).

With Public Health plans to have students aged 12+ fully vaccinated prior to the start of school, we hope to see a return to school life that includes athletics, co-curricular activities and a breadth of program opportunities. In addition, we hope to see a return to the semester format (4 courses) for the second semester.

Special Education Services will be reviewing registrations for remote learning and determining which self-contained classes will be needed in remote, as well as the impact on classes in-person.

4. **Student Transitions** - During this period of remote registration, student transitions have been paused to ensure we have the most up-to-date information on placement/location. Once the registration process closes (tonight) and class assignments complete, school and SES staff will develop a transition plan to support a student's change in class/school. In addition, schools are planning for supports in late August to ensure a smooth transition into the new school year for students with special education needs. Those supports are organized by the school and may look a little different from school to school or student to student, based on individual needs.

5. **Special Athletes Track Meet - update**

- Runs from June 14-18
 - We have guest speakers for each day of the event: Stuart Millar, Ryan - Special Olympics Ambassador, Carmelina Moscato - three-time Olympic Medalist, Terry Dunfield - former TFC player and Dashawn Williams - future Paralympian.
 - We have 66 class registrations which include nearly 500 athletes ranging from JK to CPP. ●
- O Canada, Athlete's Oath and Land Acknowledgment videos have been submitted from 15

different classes.

- Ribbons have been mailed to schools and to homes of our virtual students including brailled ribbons for our BLV students.

4.2 Association Reports

M. Dockeray reported that this week is National AccessAbility Week.

A. Brindle reported that LDAHH is running a variety of summer programs this year for students with learning disabilities. We have literacy and numeracy programs running daily for one hour a day for three weeks each in both July and August, as well as a two-week social skills program. Our Youth 2 Youth program is gaining momentum and creates a safe space for youth aged 14-25 to share their experience of living with learning disabilities and just get to connect with like-minded individuals. The next Stronger Together meeting for Y2Y is on June 9th.

We are also working with the LDA Chapters across Ontario to run a Parent Conference on LDs online in August. More information is available on www.ldahh.ca.

At this point in the meeting Superintendent Ruddock wanted to express her gratitude to all SEAC members for their support as she begins her new portfolio as Superintendent of Special Education.

4.3 Trustee Reports

T. Ehl Harrison reported that the hiring processes for three superintendents and Director of Education are now complete. We welcome Dean Barnes, Claire Proteau, and Aiman Flahat. We also look forward to welcoming Curtis Ennis as the new Director of Education. (From press release: Ennis' career portfolio during the past 22 years has included a variety of senior leadership positions with the Toronto District School Board, Canada's largest school board, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Education. Ennis began his career as a primary teacher and advanced through various leadership roles as a Superintendent of Education with increasing responsibilities. He is currently the Associate Director, Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement (Interim). Ennis has led numerous strategic planning initiatives in the TDSB, as well as gaining leadership experience with the Ministry of Education's Toronto and Area Regional Office.)

Halton Education Action 2.0 regarding TVO's expanded mandate for online learning. Trustees hosted a meeting in May, and have conveyed concerns to the Minister.

Trustees have recently also conveyed concerns to the Minister regarding the delayed release of the de-streamed grade 9 math curriculum.

A report is coming to the Board tomorrow in support of student advocacy for menstrual equity across Ontario.

Before the Board in June are - operational plan, special education plan, education development charges by-law amendment, boundaries for the new Milton SW#11 school, budget.

The Student Trustees and Student Senate just completed their extremely successful Halton Youth Leadership Symposium aimed at students in Grades 7 and 8. Approximately 260 students participated in this virtual event. Keynote speakers included Director Stuart Miller, HDSB Human Rights and Equity Advisor Dr. Jewel Amoah and Dillon Mendes, a Canadian Youth Speaker. There were two rounds of workshops completely designed and delivered by student senators. These included: Current Issues; Equity and Diversity; Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship; High School Survival Guide; Mental Health, and Public Speaking.

Seen something that inspires you? The [Inspire Award](#) is given to an individual or group that is formally or informally associated with the Halton District School Board, who support our students and their achievements through exemplary caring, initiative, innovation and creativity.

We'd like to wish everyone the best for a healthy and happy summer!

4.4 Committee Reports

- PIC - none
- Accessibility Coordinating Committee - L. Morris reported on the accessibility gym at White Oaks Secondary School. L. Goodrow will send this slideshow to members.
- Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Steering Committee - D. Vandenbossche reported that a meeting will be held this upcoming Thursday.

5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

6.0 Adjournment

6.1 A. Brindle adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.