



# Halton District School Board

## HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### Special Education Advisory Committee - (Virtual Meeting)

Tuesday, June 2, 2020, 7pm

#### MINUTES

Present: Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Alison Brindle (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); James Baldwin (Member at Large); Margo Shuttleworth (Trustee); Heather Gerrits (Trustee); Lucille Morris (Member at Large); Tracey Ehl Harrison (Trustee); Deirdre Woo (Association for Bright Children); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Society); Mike Brown (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Diane Miller (Member at Large)

Staff: Mark Zonneveld (Superintendent); Sean Marks (Principal of Special Education); Lorna Goodrow (Administrator, Student Services)

Regrets: Diane Vandenbossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton/Hamilton); Hetal Shah (Association of Bright Children); Lisa Cameron (Autism Ontario); Judy Shiels (Voice)

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

J. Oliver read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

##### 1.3 Approval of Agenda

#152-20 D. Miller and S. Siddiqi

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approved the agenda for June 2, 2020.

**Carried Unanimously**

##### 1.4 Minutes of May 5, 2020

#153-20 A. Brindle and J. Baldwin

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for May 5, 2020 be approved.

**Carried Unanimously**

Director S. Miller wanted to thank M. Zonneveld, S. Marks, the Student Services Department and Trustees for their continued work, support, and involvement during this unprecedented time.

## **2.0 Action**

2.1 M. Zonneveld updated SEAC on the budget items that have changed in the SPED Plan. The GSN funding may further change other items in the SPED Plan. Regulation does require that SEAC approve this Plan. A vote will need to be taken to support the Plan or not. The outcome will be shared with Trustees. There was a Q&A on the Plan.

M. Zonneveld and J. Oliver asked that SEAC vote on the Special Education Plan as is, before going to the Trustees for approval. There was unanimous approval on the Special Education Plan by the Special Education Advisory Committee.

### **2.2 Parent Awareness of SEAC and Associations**

A. Brindle asked if the mobile app could be publicized at the start of every school year? A. Brindle asked if we could put all Associations names and numbers on the back of the Working Together Postcard? M. Zonneveld remarked that we could consider this. Association's information will need to be as current as possible.

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

L. Morris asked if any members had any questions about the Board's on-line distance learning? M. Shuttleworth commented that the Ministry is asking for feedback from all SEACs across the Province on what going back to school will look like and could we collectively create a letter from SEAC to the Ministry on this?

L. Goodrow was asked to work with SEAC Chairs (L. Morris and J. Oliver), to help create a survey to share with SEAC so they can then share the survey with their members/community to obtain feedback on the HDSB's on-line distance learning model. The Chairs will use the results of this survey to formulate a letter to the Ministry on behalf of our SEAC Committee.

## **4.0 Communication to SEAC**

### **4.1 Superintendent's Report – June 2, 2020**

#### **1. Online Resources for Students and Families During School Closure**

New resources continue to be added to the board's hdsb.ca website for Special Education Learning Resources and Mental Health and Well-Being to support distance learning and mental health during the school closure.

#### **2. Summer Learning and Supports for Students with Special Needs**

The Ministry just announced funding for programs and services for students with special needs over the summer. These programs and services may include the following:

- Virtual Summer School programming, with additional resources that may include SERT and EA support
- Virtual summer programming for students at Syl Apps
- Mental health supports for students currently receiving service, and for those in crisis
- Transition programming opportunities at the end of August, which may include virtual summer AT Camps

These programs and services will be finalized and shared with families in the coming weeks, pending direction and funding from the Ministry.

#### **3. Erinoak Autism Program closing**

The Erinoak Autism Program, jointly offered between Erinoak and the board, will close at the end of June. The Ministry has changed the funding structure for Erinoak, and it must operate all programs for students with ASD on a fee for service model. Unfortunately, the Erinoak Autism Class, which has

been located at Eastview the past few years, is not sustainable for Erinoak. This has been a strong partnership between Erinoak and the board, and we are sorry to see it end. Students will be transitioned back to their home schools.

#### 4. CPS Parent Network

A Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Parent Network opportunity is currently running virtually. This network supports parents utilizing the CPS philosophy of 'kids do well if they can' with strategies appropriate for the home and family environment. These 8 virtual sessions occur once per week until the end of June. This was announced to parents and the 25 spots filled in one day, with 70+ on a waiting list. We hope to offer more sessions in the fall.

#### 5. Virtual Special Athlete's Track Meet

With the school closure, we are finding ways to continue celebrating our students as the end of the school year approaches. One of these ways is to hold our Special Athlete's Track Meet in a virtual format. Messaging has gone home giving families the option to choose an activity(s) with possible adaptations and take a picture or video of their child doing that activity. Submissions are due by June 8, and the final product will be posted on June 19. We are excited about this opportunity to encourage our students with special needs to keep active, and to celebrate their abilities. We will be sure to share this with SEAC.

#### 6. Budget Update

The Ministry usually sends boards the Grant for Student Needs (GSN) by late March in order to facilitate board planning, community input (including SEAC), and trustee approval by the end of June. We learned recently that the release of the GSN continues to be delayed and therefore we cannot yet finalize and approve the budget for 2020-2021. This may not occur until July, or even August, which is unprecedented. Staff and trustees appreciate the supportive feedback from SEAC last month and will certainly keep students with special needs at the forefront of their deliberations and decisions in determining the budget for next year.

#### 4.2 Association Reports

A. Brindle reported that LDAHH has been running free 1:1 online tutoring support for students with learning disabilities with support from the Hamilton Community Foundation, Burlington Foundation and the Halton Region. There are still a few spots available. Please contact [info@ldahh.ca](mailto:info@ldahh.ca) for more information.

LDAH is offering 1:1 AT support services in association with LearnStyle. The first session is FREE for anyone. Sessions are then offered at a discounted rate of \$40 per hour.

<https://ldahh.ca/community-events/>

M. Dockeray reported on National AccessAbility Week, May 31 – June 6 and Red T-Shirt Day, June 3

May 31 to June 6, 2020, is National AccessAbility Week. This is a time for Canadians to promote inclusion and accessibility in our communities and workplaces, and to celebrate the contributions of Canadians with disabilities. It is also a time to recognize the efforts of individuals, communities and workplaces who are actively removing barriers to give Canadians of all abilities a better chance to succeed. By bringing Canadians together to recognize the valuable contributions of persons with disabilities, we are strengthening the collaborative effort needed to create a country that is fully accessible and inclusive. Easter Seals Ontario supports all efforts to improve accessibility in Ontario for children and youth with physical disabilities. Together with our donors we strive to improve accessibility by helping children and youth get the equipment they need to access their homes and

community and be included at school and in the community. In addition, Easter Seals provides fully accessible recreation programs at our camps for over 800 children and youth each year.

#### RED T-SHIRT DAY – Wednesday, June 3, 2020

By wearing red on Red T-Shirt Day on June 3, 2020, individuals can show their support and join others across Canada in creating a visible display of solidarity for persons who are living with disabilities, and the importance of creating a fully accessible and inclusive society that honours and values the contributions of people of all abilities in all aspects of life in Canada. On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, post a selfie or a photo of you with your friends, classmates or colleagues — all wearing your red t-shirts — on social media. Don't forget to tag @EasterSealsON and use the hashtags #EasterSealsOntario, #AccessAbilityForAll, and/or #RedForAccessAbility.

S. Siddiqi reported that June 20, 2020 is Halton Down's Syndrome Virtual Walk for Down's Syndrome.

#### 4.3 Trustee Reports

J. Oliver reported that the Board of Trustees followed SEAC in adopting the Google Meets platform for Board meetings and this has made a positive difference and has been received well by all. Most of the meetings focus on updates in response to the pandemic and now turning focus to planning for a return to school in September. This will be directed by the Ministry of Education under the guidance from Public Health. As you heard earlier, a number of surveys will be coming out, both from HDSB and the Ministry, seeking feedback on how online learning has been working out for students and their families and the realities of school closures and distance learning.

The Milton SW#1 High School boundary review work will resume in September with community consultations scheduled for the fall. Information about the process and the various scenarios are available on the HDSB.ca website.

The work on the Multi-Year Plan also had to be put on hold until the fall. However, the impact of the pandemic on education and our students will give us lots to think about as we reflect and perhaps will help to shape a few concepts as well.

Due to the pandemic, the release of the Grants for Student Needs, which is the main portion of funding for school boards from the Ministry of Education, has been delayed. The budget submission deadlines therefore have also been delayed until roughly mid-August, therefore necessitating some work on this during the summer months.

The Student Senate held its final meeting, by video, with more than 50 student senators participating. The main work goal of this meeting was to finalize a motion around the Declaration of a Climate Emergency. Student Trustees will be presenting their motion at the Board meeting tomorrow night. This meeting was also a lovely end to the Senate for this school year and full of farewells.

Our two Student Trustees will be ending their term. Olivia will be entering Gr 12 and Matthew is graduating and so we wish him all the best in his post-secondary endeavours.

Finally, as June is a month of celebrations...we continue in this tradition and will be celebrating virtually all graduations at a specified date and time for each school, including a virtual prom (on June 11); HDSB staff retirements and the closure of Bateman High School. Trustees are contributing grad messages to the virtual celebrations to honour the students in their areas.

#### **4.4 Committee Reports**

- PIC – none
- Accessibility Coordinating Committee - none
- Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Steering Committee – D. Woo attended meeting on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020. There was a discussion on student census and a working group. They will be reaching out to community groups, and in particular to SEAC. D. Woo would like all SEAC members permission to be included in this. SEAC gave their permission to be contacted by this student census working group.
- Nelson/Robert Bateman HS Integration Steering Committee – none
- Central/Robert Bateman HS IB Program Integration Steering Committee – none

#### **5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper**

J. Oliver wanted to remind everyone about their Association presentations and how we can make it available to our parent/families via our SEAC website. The Q&A document is still available to all members.

#### **6.0 Adjournment**

6.1 L. Morris adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.