

Halton District School Board



HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Special Education Advisory Committee - (Virtual Meeting)

Tuesday, November 2, 2021 7pm

MINUTES

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

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

Regrets: Joanna Oliver (Trustee); Lisa Cameron (Autism Ontario)

1.0 Opening

1.1 Welcome and Call to Order

A. Brindle called the meeting to order at 7:05p.m.

1.2 Honouring the Land and Territory

A. Brindle read the Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

At this point, Superintendent Ruddock shared a slide/reflection on Indigenous Rights. Superintendent Ruddock invited other SEAC members if they had something they would like to share or reflect upon around Indigenous Rights. Several members did share/reflect on this subject. Superintendent Ruddock thanked everyone for their reflections.

1.3 Approval of Agenda

#180-22 T. Ehl Harrison and Y. Gorica

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approved the agenda for November 2, 2021.

Carried Unanimously

1.4 Minutes of October 5, 2021

#181-22 H. Gerrits and S. Siddiqi

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for October 5, 2021 be approved.

Carried Unanimously

2.0 Action

2.1 Problem Solving Pathway presentation was made by S. Marks, Principal of Special Education Services Department. Superintendent Ruddock and several SEAC members thanked S. Marks for this very informative presentation. There was an opportunity for questions after the presentation.

3.0 SEAC Discussion/Question Period

R. Hurren asked about EA support and if there is a policy or a criteria on the number of EAs that would circulate through a student's day? Superintendent Ruddock confirmed that there is not a formal policy designed around a certain number of EAs for each student in a day. However, it is a recommended practice that a student receiving EA support receives such support from a minimum of 2 adults in their day, where possible.

At this point in the meeting, A. Brindle introduced a matter for consideration and a motion was brought forward.

Motion: that the SEAC Committee for the Halton District School Board writes a letter to the Minister of Education asking him to authorize school boards to work directly with their regional public health departments to determine the most appropriate school cohorting model for their region. This will allow us to ensure we meet regional public health concerns whilst ensuring maximum flexibility within our schools and the ability to accommodate the mental health needs of our students. As the Province has already started to move to a full reopening, it is vital that our students are allowed to learn in a way that reduces their anxiety and improves their chances of success. This requires an immediate change to the Semester system in areas such as Halton where our cases are low. I respectfully ask for your feedback on this motion. This motion was seconded by R. Hurren, Halton Down Syndrome Association. Several Trustees also supported this motion and a discussion amongst the members took place. This motion has been recorded and passed.

Superintendent Ruddock shared additional information regarding support for students with ADHD, as well as how the SEAC discussion has informed special education training scheduled for this year.

4.0 Communication to SEAC

4.1 Superintendent's Report for November, 2021

1. November is Indigenous Peoples Awareness Month and this week is Treaty Awareness Month. The board demonstrates commitment to Indigenous perspectives and education through the goals of the Multi-Year Plan, which now identifies this as one of five commitment areas. An action within this commitment is the implementation of the Grade 11 English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices across all secondary schools. This credit will be the mandatory Grade 11 English credit and the board has a three-year implementation plan to ensure staff are well prepared to teach this course from an uncolonized practice.

2. The Ministry of Education is launching a secondary school credit: ASL as a Second Language. School Programs and Special Education staff recently attended a Ministry session as a beginning point in this work, with a goal to add this credit to the course selections in the upcoming years.

3. The [Human Rights Symposium on Thursday, Dec. 9 and Friday, Dec. 10, 2021](#) to engage in vital conversations and challenge our thinking. This year's Symposium will be a virtual event for HDSB students and staff only. The theme of the 2021 Human Rights Symposium is *Identity & Human Rights* which will explore how intersecting identities impacts one's access to and enjoyment of Human Rights.

4. Grade 4 CCAT7 administration is now complete. Families will receive their child's results in late November. Families will be informed at this time whether their child meets HDSB criteria to continue on in the gifted screening and/or identification process.

4.2 Association Reports

A. Brindle reported that LDAHH is holding a workshop on Navigating the IEP/IPRC Process on 17th November 2021, online at 7pm. Registration is through [Events - Learning Disabilities Association of Halton Hamilton \(ldahh.ca\)](#)

We are also going to be opening registration for our 11th Annual Educators Conference next week. This will be held online on March 4/5, 2022, and has amazing speakers such as Dr. Susan Hopkins, Dean Bragonier, Dr. Linda Siegel, Sarah Ward. Topics include literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional learning, the OHRC Right to Read Report, UDL, Assistive Tech, ADHD, and Non-verbal LDs. It is an amazing professional development and learning opportunity for educators, professionals, and parents.

4.3 Trustee Reports

1. A new School Dress Code [Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) have been developed / updated. These are meant to reflect the new Multi Year Plan values, be collaboratively developed/updated for inclusion.

2. Trustees recently [wrote to the Minister](#) asking for clarification about the return to a regular semester model in secondary school. We also discussed when elementary students may return to non-cohorted outdoor breaks. Superintendent Blackwell has raised this with Public Health, and it is being taken forward to the provincial level.

3. The Long Term Accommodation Plan was approved. The [report](#) provides a good summary of the main student accommodation challenges and proposed projects across the region. Please note that this is separate from the annual construction work that takes place in many schools each year. These projects can be found [here](#) in this handy newish resource.

4. The HDSB, like all Ontario Boards, has set up a COVID-19 Vaccine Disclosure [portal](#). You can access it here to see the most up to date statistics.

5. At the last meeting, it was mentioned that the process to rename Ryerson Public School was underway. Here is a [link](#) to the Board Report for November 3 with the three shortlisted names, Creekside, Makwendam (muck-kwen-dum), and Parkside.

6. At the November 3 Board meeting, there is a [report](#) about Supporting Students and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing, outlining the resources and activities that are taking place this year, including "circles of support", stress relief kits for students in self-contained and LD classrooms, and mentor texts for mental health and well-being in classrooms. Among supports for staff are programs, including "The Ripple Effect", and a Mental Health & Resilience Program.

7.Trustees, through the Chair, have sent two letters regarding COVID immunizations recently.

- a) [Chief Medical Officer of Health](#) to add COVID-19 as a "designated disease" to the Immunization of School Pupils Act. Note: The CMO has indicated that this is not going to proceed.
- b) [Minister of Education and Minister of Health](#) to ask that the immunization of Schools Pupils Act be amended to include COVID-19 as a “designated disease”

4.4 Committee Reports

- Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) - none
- Accessibility Coordinating Committee - L. Morris would like feedback from members on the draft definition of disability. L. Morris read the draft definition to all members.
- Equity & Inclusive Education Advisory Steering Committee - none
- Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy Steering and Advisory Committee - Y. Gorica confirmed that this Committee will meet 3 times a year.

5.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

Presentation/Guest Speaker

Draft definition of Disability - gather feedback from members for the Accessibility

Coordinating Committee

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

6.0 Adjournment

6.1 A. Brindle adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.