



# Halton District School Board

**HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Special Education Advisory Committee**  
JWS – Large Boardroom  
Tuesday April 11, 2017, 7pm

## MINUTES

Present: Denise Nacev, **Chair** (Member-at-Large); Amy Collard (Trustee Alternate); Leah Reynolds (Trustee Representative); Dawn Spence (Association for Bright Children); Tammy Beattie (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton); Kim Graves (Trustee Representative); Mike Brown (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Melissa Dockeray (Easter Seals Ontario); Lucille Morris (Member-at-Large); Carla Marshall (Autism Ontario); Sophia Siddiqi (Halton Down Syndrome Association); Richelle Papin (Trustee Alternate); Diane Vandebossche (Learning Disabilities Association of Halton)

Staff: Mark Zonneveld (Superintendent); Jane Lewis (Principal of Special Education); Margaret Kew (Vice-Principal of Special Education); Rebecca Bardin (SEAC Assistant)

Trustees: Jeanne Gray,

Regrets: Jason Bartlett (Member-at-Large); Sherry Foster (Association for Bright Children);

Absent: Keren Mack (Autism Ontario)

1.0 **Opening**

1.1. Welcome and Call to Order

D. Nacev called the meeting to order at **7:07** p.m.

1.2. Approval of Agenda

#74-17 L. Morris/S. Siddiqi

Be it resolved that the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda for April 11, 2017.

**Carried Unanimously**

2.0 **Call for Notices of Motion/Reports to the Board**

None.

3.0 **Action**

3.1. Minutes of March 6, 2017 meeting

#75-17 L. Reyholds/S. Siddiqi

Be it resolved that the minutes for the meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee for March 6, 2017 be approved as amended.

**Carried Unanimously**

### 3.2. Sped. Review Feedback

D. Nacev spoke to the recent Sped Review data that was presented to SEAC at the March meeting. SEAC gathered in three groups to discuss suggestions for areas of further discussion:

- Student enrolment data
- Non-academic and achievement report
- Survey results (parents and students)

D. Nacev reviewed the suggestions collected by SEAC and mentioned that this information will be taken back to Student Services for further discussions.

M. Zonneveld responded that the study of the Sped Review data will continue into phase II. Trustees recognize that more work is required to research the data further and ideas are being shared as to next direction.

A. Collard would like to know if the process to identify gifted students is being reviewed to be more effective and efficient? D. Vandebossche voiced her support in A. Collard's concerns surrounding the process and feels that there are inconsistencies amongst the exceptionalities and the process for entering self-contained classes.

M. Zonneveld responded that the following questions are being asked:

What the identification process looks like and how to make it more efficient?

How are we best serving those students or, how are we best serving all students of that age group?

M. Zonneveld mentioned that the review data has provided a benchmark as well as highlighted other areas. Models and comparisons of other boards are being reviewed while also being cognisant of the responsibility to utilize resources appropriately.

M. Zonneveld welcomes SEAC's ideas, comments, questions and ongoing discussions.

### 3.3. High Level Budget Discussion

M. Zonneveld introduced budget and mentioned that the process has been delayed due to provincial contract negotiations. This has caused a delay in the release of the GSN.

L. Veerman is attending a budget meeting tomorrow which will provide more detail to HDSB. These delays are compressing our budget timelines. Trustees will be provided budget figures closer to the end of April. Due to these delays, it is suggested that a higher level generic discussion take place at this SEAC meeting.

D. Nacev added that it is unknown at this time if HDSB Special Education will be adding, removing or remaining neutral. D. Nacev suggested that all options be discussed.

M. Zonneveld commented that SEAC's input method for PAR was very helpful to PARC and suggested that SEAC consider a similar method for SEAC budget recommendation input.

SEAC members brought forward budget suggestions/concerns and discussion ensued.

D. Nacev thanked SEAC for their contribution and suggested that SEAC send any feedback/suggestions to her and mentioned that this info would be useful for Student Services to consider in the budget planning process.

L. Morris suggested that the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting may not be sufficient time needed for SEAC to provide budget feedback.

D. Nacev responded that consideration will be made for an additional SEAC meeting in May.

K. Graves provided a timeline for SEAC to consider:

- Committee of the Whole meeting will take place tomorrow
- Two weeks after will be PAR
- May 10<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup> are likely Board budget discussions

D. Nacev reminded SEAC that budget sessions are open for SEAC to attend and recommends attending if you are available.

#### 4.0 **Questions from the Public**

None.

#### 5.0 **SEAC Discussion/Question Period**

T. Beattie – ELDC was the primary feeder for PLC. Now that ELDC has been removed who is being recommended for these classes as many of the PLC students came from ELDC?

M. Zonneveld responded that the primary referral continues to come from the teacher and speech-language pathologist. Speech-language pathologists are spending more time in the classroom. Focus is on building capacity within the school resource team and ideally being addressed within the classroom.

A. Collard mentioned that a teacher in the CPP classroom has raised concerns with the Behaviour Management System (BMS). Concern is that students in the CPP class sometimes require an escort to a room and the room needs to be evacuated. The teacher is concerned that this does not fall under the BMS protocol.

M. Zonneveld responded that BMS focus is less hands-on and more behaviour management but there may also be specific training that will be needed for individual students. CPP staff have not yet received the BMS training and this will become more clear once staff have completed the training.

D. Spence would like to know how many kids were identified in the north? Are we trying to phase out or did many parents say that they wanted to keep their kids in the regular classroom?

M. Zonneveld responded that the Ministry feels that the first and best placement for all students is at their home school. Board staff is focusing on support in the classroom and is hopeful families are finding students are being served well at their home school.

M. Zonneveld will look into this data further and report findings back to SEAC.

M. Zonneveld responded to the concerns brought forward regarding the content on the the IPRC Waiver letter and confirmed that all previously requested changes were made.

This is a form letter and the identification historically was not listed on the letter but is listed on the initial placement and also the IEP. Suggested changes to the letter will be reviewed with staff/vendor, we will report back to SEAC the outcome of the recommendations.

6.0 **Communication to SEAC**

6.1. **Superintendent's Report – April 2017**

**SEAC Superintendent's Report – April 11, 2017**

1. **Learning Centre Referrals Update Report**

This report to the board on April 19, 2017 is shared with SEAC. Students have been tracked over the first six months of this year. Data collection has included geography and profiles, supports, achievement and next steps. Overall these students are doing quite well. Staff development will continue to be focused on understanding student profiles and differentiating instruction to meet individual student needs.

D. Vandebossche inquired, of the 17 students on last year's LC referral list, 12 students are diagnosed with Learning Disabilities. Are the remaining 5 students on Non - id IEPS? What is their learning profile?

M. Zonneveld responded that the remaining five were non-identified students.

D. Vandebossche highlighted that the 19 out of 80+ elementary schools involved in the Supporting the LD Learner in Mathematics learning series doesn't seem like many. Why only 19 and how were they chosen?

M. Zonneveld responded that each board developed a model which provided a rich learning environment. This was possible due to PD funding that was passed as part of the 2016/2017 budget. The intent of the pilot consisting of 19 schools was to monitor the results and determine if there was improvement. Follow up discussions will take place based on the results of the pilot, it will then be determined if this learning will work for all schools.

D. Vandebossche responded to the statement "Some students are supported by LLI program delivered by the LRT or SERT." Hopefully these students have mastered Phonological Awareness skills. If not, LLI does not meet their needs as it does not address the learning of this skills. How are their needs being met? What remediation is happening for them?

D. Vandebossche responded to the statement "Ten students are working on grade level curriculum, supported by an IEP that is modified in number and/or complexity of outcomes. Two students are working on curriculum that is one grade level below their assigned grade in Language." Why is modification still happening? Students with Learning Disabilities have average to above average cognitive ability with deficits in specific areas. These specific areas need remediation not the entire curriculum in Language, Math or any other area.

D. Vandebossche responded to the statement "Progressing Well or Progressing Very Well in modified" program areas is not a good outcome.

D. Vandebossche commented on what LDAH would like to see added to Next Steps - An increased emphasis on Early Intervention assessment, appropriate programs-remediation. Specific instruction in Phonological Awareness is more appropriate than a canned reading program.

## 2. Changes to Self-Contained Classes

The following changes to self-contained classes are occurring for September:

### **West:**

Close BRC at Sir E. MacMillan (move 2 students to Rolling Meadows)

### **Central:**

Close LD class at Boyne (move 4 students to JM Denyes)

Move Communication Class from JM Denyes to Martin Street

Move 1 Life Skills from Sam Sherratt to Martin Street

Open 1 Life Skills at Martin Street

### **East:**

Close PROPS at White Oaks SS (no student moves)

Expand CPP at WOSS to include Community Skills Certificate pathway

### **North:**

Open 1 Life Skills at McKenzie-Smith Bennett

Open 1 Jr BRC at Gardiner

D. Vandebossche questioned if the number of students being identified impacted the closure of classes?

M. Zonneveld responded that this is an interesting question that should be reviewed further as part of the second stage of the Special Education Review.

S. Siddiqi commented on previous long wait lists of the PROPS program.

M. Zonneveld responded that the Oakville location has not had a wait list in the past 3 years. Currently the program consists of three students. Each of these students have other classrooms they will return to. Teacher and EA's have been put in hold back in the event that the class is needed.

## 3. Review of Safety Risks for Students with Medical and/or Mobility Needs

This draft board report is in response to the board motion from Sept 2014. This review has been conducted over the past 18 months and has confirmed that students with medical and/or mobility needs attending schools in the Halton District School Board experience high levels of safety, support and supervision. Staff training will continue to be a major focus in the support of these students. I welcome SEAC questions, comments and suggestions regarding this review and report. The report is scheduled to go to the board on April 19, 2017.

M. Dockeray responded that the wheelchair accessible busing is a major concern.

M. Zonneveld responded that the language of the motion was reviewed and the purpose was to honour the motion as well as focus more broadly. Data was gathered to provide specifics as to what does the supervision look like. The big question in the motion was "Are our students with mobility needs safe" This question was asked across many levels.

M. Dockeray would like to know if the question was specifically asked “Are students safe during transportation?”

M. Zonneveld responded that this was asked. Questions were carefully reviewed to be sure that methodology was fair.

M. Dockeray voiced questions and concerns surrounding the safety of students when transported and the ability for students to protect themselves against other students. M. Dockeray is not confident that there is a system in place to protect the students during transportation.

M. Zonneveld responded that transportation and student safety is a primary topic that is discussed regularly. Conversations with staff are focused on the specific needs of the students’ and plans are continuously being reviewed and adjusted to fit their safety requirements.

M. Dockeray is concerned that the response rate of the questionnaire was low. Easter Seals’ perspective is that transportation requires attention but school safety is well taken care of. Would like to see a future questionnaire that asks parents specifically “Do you feel your child is safe on the bus?”

#### 4. EA Staffing Challenges

Across the board, there are unfilled vacancies for absent EAs in many schools on a daily basis. This creates challenges for schools as they have to adjust staff schedules and student routines in order to ensure that students have appropriate support each day. We are working with the Halton District Educational Assistant Association (HDEAA) to better understand why this shortage of supply EAs is occurring through an EA survey, compensation comparisons with other boards, and an examination of other issues. We also know that this is a province wide issue and hope to develop solutions to alleviate these staffing challenges.

S. Siddiqi would like to know how are we preparing our students for this disruption? Recommends that a standard binder be available outlining the student profile and information specific to the student. S. Siddiqi is concerned that we are inadvertently teaching students to trust strangers.

M. Zonneveld agrees that this can be challenging for students that require routine. HDSB is intentional about finding a balance of having more than one staff member work with a student throughout the day. This is beneficial for both the student and the staff. Contingency plans are put in place to assist in meeting the student’s needs. Staff can be shifted to assist students that require contingency plans.

## 6.2 Association Reports

LDAH – D. Vandenbossche

- LDAH Conference was very successful
- Lecture series – April 25<sup>th</sup> , Key Note Speaker is John Williams “Surviving After School Homework”
- Planning underway for a new Pro Grant
- Reading Rocks has started-last session of the year

S. Siddiqi

- Down Syndrome Awareness Week - fabulous support from Halton schools and supporting inclusivity

### 6.3. Trustee Reports

L. Reynolds

- Monday May 8<sup>th</sup> – 25 delegation spots, Thursday May 11<sup>th</sup> – 25 delegations spots, Wednesday May 17<sup>th</sup> – 6 delegation spots, Wednesday June 7<sup>th</sup> – 6 delegation spots.
- Final PAR Report will come to the board on May 17<sup>th</sup> trustee decision June 7<sup>th</sup>

### 6.4. Committees and Other Reports

PIC – D. Spence

- Conference is scheduled for October 2017, Aligning with the values and mission of the Board's multi-year plan, our theme for the this year's conference encompasses equity, well-being, and inclusivity –Keynote speaker Candy Palmater

Protocol Committee- T. Beattie

- Suggested applying for a Pro Grant to provide funds to create a booklet with SEAC info and Association info for students and parents.

Accessibility Coordinating Committee- R. Papin

March 9<sup>th</sup>, Multi-Year plan

- each member was able to provided updates for their section and will bring feedback from their departments for the final input on May 11<sup>th</sup>
- looking for a SEAC Rep - please contact R. Papin if interested
- passed on input received from SEAC for the Multi Year Plan

D. Nacev inquired if there are any SEAC Representatives interested in the Vice-Chair position. A. Collard suggested that this could be filled through a rotation. K. Graves volunteered to Vice-Chair the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### 7.0 Next Agenda/Order Paper

Pending budget information/details availability

A. Collard would like the regular scheduled meeting to take place in May and a budget meeting be added.

### 8.0 Adjournment

#### 8.1 Motion to Adjourn

#76-17 D. Vandenbossche/L. Reynolds

“THAT the meeting be adjourned.”

**Carried Unanimously**

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 pm