



June 9, 2022

Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block 22nd Floor 900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2
Stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister of Education,

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the Halton District School Board (HDSB) recently received a letter from the Superior-Greenstone District School Board asking for the Ministry of Education to:

Request that consideration is given to making Regulation 632/20 a permanent amendment and continue to allow all meetings to occur virtually.

At our committee meeting on May 10th, 2022, the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee approved the following motion:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee Chair sends a letter to the Minister of Education supporting this request by Superior-Greenstone District School Board.

Carried unanimously.

At HDSB, we believe in equity for and representation by all members of our community, from the shores of Lake Ontario to those north of Acton and Georgetown. Residents from Northern Halton have traditionally had more challenges ensuring that their voice is heard at the Board or Committee levels, due to the larger distances they must travel to participate in meetings. This leads to fewer expressions of interest from residents in these regions to join committees.

The implementation of Regulation 632/20 has led to a seamless transition to virtual meetings for our SEAC during COVID. Committee members can use accessibility tools, such as captioning, which have not necessarily been available during in-person meetings. We have also seen increased participation levels at our SEAC meetings, as members do not have to travel an hour or more to attend meetings. It allows more equitable access to meetings for committee members, school board staff reporting to the committee, and guests, particularly those from more unrepresented groups such as those with lower incomes, who may not have the

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funds to attend physical meetings, and to parents/caregivers who do not have to find childcare while they attend a meeting.

We strongly encourage the Minister to consider making the virtual meeting requirements in Regulatory Amendment 632/20 permanent and optional for boards to use if they determine it to be in the best interests of their communities.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Brindle,
Chair, HDSB SEAC

cc: Margo Shuttleworth, HDSB Chair of the Board