

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Room 308, Education Centre

Present

Association Representatives – voting members

Cecile Santos-Ayrault, The Association for Bright Children of Ontario (alternate)
Dawn Danko, Truste Ward 7
Jessica Malcew, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children
Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair
Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners
Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children’s Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair
Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre
Mark Courtepatte, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group
Melanie Roberts, The Association for Bright Children of Ontario
Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton
Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton and Niagara
Tracy Sherriff, Community Living Hamilton

Regrets

Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3
Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario (Central West Chapter)

Staff

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Special Education, Inclusion & Equity
Kimberly Chute, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity
John Manzin, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity – Transition Navigation
Yannis Tjanetis, Hamilton-Wentworth Principals’ Council – Elementary
Krista Brodersen, Hamilton-Wentworth Principals’ Council - Secondary

Item	Discussion/Decision
1. Welcome and Call to Order	Judy Colantino called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm welcoming everyone
2. Land Acknowledgement	Judy Colantino, Chair of SEAC
3. Approval of Agenda	On the motion of Julie Armstrong, seconded by Tracy Sheriff, the Committee recommends that the agenda be approved CARRIED.
4. Special Education, Inclusion & Equity Department Structure (formerly Specialized Services)	Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Special Education, Inclusion & Equity presented an overview of the new department structure <ul style="list-style-type: none">Name change from Specialized Services to Special Education, Inclusion & Equity: Special Education – to reflect language that parents are familiar with and consistent with Ministry language: Inclusion – it’s what we are all about – most inclusive and least restrictive: Equity – is everyone’s work.Family of Schools Model where each (FOS) is supported by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. Some provide service to the (FOS) and others to all schools.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This model blends the previous Autism & Neurodevelopmental Services and Behaviour Analytic Services into one team, allowing system staff to focus and support more intensely across a smaller number of schools. • The multi-disciplinary team (MDT) of professionals support all students who access special education supports and services, reducing waitlists and referrals. Collaboration is essential for improved student outcomes. • This approach allows clearer pathways for support, prevents duplication of services and provides more intensive responses.
5. SEAC Meeting Structure Overview	<p>Judy Colantino, Chair of SEAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going forward, the SEAC meeting time will end at 7:30 pm instead of 7:00 pm. • To be held in person at the HWDSB Education Centre, with a hybrid option for those who are unable to attend.
6. Approval of the Minutes ▪ June 12, 2024	<p>On the motion of Julie Armstrong, seconded by Susi Owen, the Committee recommends that the minutes be approved</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>
7. Business Arising from the Minutes	
8. Updates a) Trustees b) Local Association Representatives c) Superintendent	<p>a) Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees accepted the resignation of Ward 4 Trustee Ray Mulholland at the first Board meeting in September. He was a trustee for 52 years and we are grateful for his service. Trustees approved a by-election to find a ward 4 trustee for the remaining time in the term. • Recently we had a capital project approved - an expansion at Janet Lee. <p>b) Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs for 24-25 begin September 30th <p>Tracy Sherriff, Community Living Hamilton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from primary to alternate representative <p>Mark Courtepatte, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retiring from Committee – new representative to be announced <p>c) Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Special Education, Inclusion & Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will be presenting at the Council for Exceptional Children Conference and two staff members will be receiving an award.
9. Correspondence a) Conseil Scolaire Catholique Nouvelon	<p>On the motion of Dawn Danko, seconded by Lynn Vanderbrug, the Committee recommends that the correspondence be read and filed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>
10. Other Business	
11. Adjournment	<p>On the motion of Dawn Danko, seconded by Tracy Sherriff, the Committee recommends that the meeting be adjourned, this being done at 7:14 pm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED.</p>