



**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Draft Minutes**

March 4, 2013
Boardroom, 5050 Yonge St.

Members Present: Diana Avon, Dr. Robert Gates, Clovis Grant, Heather Breckenridge, Steven Lynette (Chair), Paul Cross, Yama Arianfar, Olga Ingrahm, Tammy Simon, Christina Buczek, Phillip Sargent, Jean-Paul Ngana, Aline Chan, Michelle Brick, Nora Green, Nancy Turner-Wright, Elaine Dodsworth-Lever, Trustee John Hastings, Trustee Howard Kaplan, Trustee Sam Sotiropoulos.

Staff Present: Sandy Spyropoulos, Cindy Burley, David Johnston, Margo Ratsep, Ken Jinkenson

Regrets: Ginny Pearce; Richard Carter; Gal Koren; Loris Bennett; Debra Hayden; Raegan Delisle

Recorder: Linda Mendonca

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
1. Call to Order	A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7:04 p.m. on Monday, March 4, 2013, in the Board Room, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, with Steven Lynette presiding.	
2. Approval of the Agenda	Sam Sotiropoulos moved that the agenda be approved. Motion carried	The Agenda was approved
3. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest	None noted	
4. Confirmation of the Minutes	<p>January Minutes Margo sent out draft January minutes for review last Friday. Dr. Gates motioned to approve the January minutes. Motion carried.</p> <p>February Minutes The February minutes were approved with the following amendment: Item #13, 1st Paragraph: delete “hosting...PIAC”, and replace with “exploring PIAC/SEAC establishing a working relationship. The conference was a first step to explore working together in general”.</p> <p>Jean – Paul Ngana that the February minutes be approved. Motion carried</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The January Minutes were approved. ▪ The February Minutes were approved.
5. Delegations/Presentations	No presentations were scheduled for today.	

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
<p>6. Business Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>a) Calendar of SEAC Meetings</p> <p>b) Membership Vacancies</p>	<p>a) Calendar of SEAC Meetings (Steven Lynette) Margo provided an optional calendar for SEAC consideration to ensure all meetings happen in time for input to board meetings. Members reviewed the calendar and confirmed the following dates for SEAC meetings; Apr 8, May 6, Jun 3, Sep 16, Oct 7, Nov 4, and Dec 9.</p> <p>b) Membership Vacancies (Steven Lynette) Margo reported that she consulted Board Services regarding SEAC membership replacement for vacancies as they arise. The process requires that SEAC inform the board of the vacancy and SEAC may choose or not choose to make a recommendation to the board regarding membership replacement. Following the most recent membership renewal process, there were no remaining Association applicants from which to choose a replacement. As noted at previous meetings there are two vacancies – one for an Association membership and a second vacancy for NE Community Alternate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 2013 SEAC Calendar of Meetings was approved. ▪ Through the minutes, the board is informed of the vacancies and may decide on how to proceed
<p>7. Trustees' Report</p>	<p>Trustee Hastings reported that there is a meeting at Thistle town CI on March 25th with Deputy Director, Mr. Lou Vavougios. The meeting is on Current Issues in Education, with a focus on TDSB Operations. John reported he is interested in attending the Annual General Meetings of member associations to learn more about their work. He attended the Down Syndrome AGM recently.</p> <p>Trustee Sotiropoulos reported that there is a meeting tomorrow night (Tues, Mar 5th, 7-9pm), called “The Future – Where is Public Education Headed” with Panel Guests Kate Hammer (Globe & Mail Education Reporter), Moira Macdonald (Freelance Education Writer (National Post), and Kristin Rushowy (Toronto Star Education Reporter). It will be held at Stephen Leacock. Student Trustee Kourosh Houshmand will attend.</p> <p>Trustee Kaplan reported that the Board is in budget season. The MOE has prematurely called in a ten-year \$29M debenture, which now adds to the TDSB deficit. The Board is trying to renegotiate with the MOE on this. The capital budget has been frozen, making it difficult to prepare for phase 4 and 5 of Full-Day Kindergarten. Unless the MOE provides funding, there will be further cuts to staff. Trustee Kaplan encouraged members to contact their trustees to share their concerns.</p> <p>The Board will be voting on March 6th on the Staff Allocations Report. Trustees will report back at the next meeting with more details.</p>	<p>Association reps to send dates of AGMs to John Hastings</p>

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
8. Chief Academic Officer's Report (Sandy Spyropoulos)	<p>Sandy Spyropoulos presented a report. <i>(See Appendix 1, page # 5 - 6)</i></p> <p>***Motion to extend the meeting moved by Trustee Hastings at 9:02 pm</p> <p>***Trustee Hastings reported that some equipment (i.e. Promethean) is not being used in some schools, and asked what kind of agreement we can have to ensure that it is being used and whether the Board can ensure in some way that the equipment is being used and properly shared when not in use.</p>	<p>Motion carried</p> <p>Sandy to raise the issue of equipment use with Superintendents of Operation.</p>
9. System Superintendent's Report	<p>Cindy Burley presented a report. <i>(See Appendix 2, page #7)</i></p>	<p>Cindy will bring a presentation to the April meeting re: Next Steps for Target 10 initiative.</p>
10. Professional Support Services Report	<p>David Johnston presented a report. <i>(See Appendix 3, page # 8-9)</i></p>	
11. Correspondence Received by the Chair	<p>Steven Lynette reviewed correspondence received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copy of a letter dated January 9, 2013 to Minister of Education Laurel Broten from Upper Grand DSB SEAC Chair Marty Fairbairn re: requesting a Ministry of Education review of the health curriculum to include FASD prior to Grade 11, and secondly in support of mandatory pre-service courses in Special Education in all Teachers Colleges ▪ Copy of letter dated Feb 21, 2013 to Minister of Education Liz Sandals from Trillium Lakelands DSB SEAC Chair Andrea Brown re: requiring a Special Education pre-requisite for graduation from Colleges of Education in Ontario ▪ Copy of letter dated February 13, 2013 to Ministers Ted McMeekin (Community and Social Services) and Liz Sandals (Education) from Thames Valley DSB Committee Chair Joyce Bennett and SEAC Chair Tracy Grant re: concerns about the Developmental Services of Ontario Agency and confusion around related processes ▪ Letter dated January 25, 2013 to SEAC Chair from Ruth Wilcock, Executive Director Ontario Brain Injury Association accompanying a copy of the OBIA Impact Report 2012 	

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Email dated March 2, 2013 from the Toronto Family Network re: Enquiry regarding February 11, 2013 minutes and March 4, 2013 agenda; Requests regarding minutes of January 7, 2013 	
12. Reports/Updates from SEAC/other TDSB Subcommittees	PIAC/SEAC Combined Work Group on Special Education (Jean-Paul Ngana) Jean-Paul reported that PIAC found a way to postpone the conference until October which gives SEAC a little more time to determine how SEAC and PIAC might collaborate on organizing the conference.	
13. Local SEAC Association Reports	There were no Association reports.	
14. New Business	<p>Yama Arianfar reported that a School Council Chair approached him regarding arranging a guest speaker for a special education parent information meeting at their school. Sandy noted that Special Education staff often provide presentations in schools regarding Special Education and Mentors program and are open to doing presentations on request.</p> <p>Dr. Gates reported that the Brain Injury Society of Ontario established a support group. It's appropriate for students in high school and meant to be a psycho-social support group facilitated by a therapist.</p> <p>Stephen Lynette reported that March 26th is Purple Day, a designated day to raise support and awareness for Epilepsy. People are encouraged to wear purple. The day was created as a special day, started by a young girl.</p> <p>Paul Cross reported on the work of the TDSB Committee on Advisory Committees. They have devised a questionnaire to survey all members of Advisory Committees, seeking their input on/perceptions of the work of Advisory Committees. The deadline for input is March 22nd.</p>	<p>SEAC members redirect parents seeking this kind of support to their school principal</p> <p>More information can be accessed at www.BIST.ca</p> <p>Margo will email the CAC survey/questionnaire to all SEAC members.</p>
15. Adjournment	Trustee moved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 p.m.	The motion carried.
16. Reminder: Next Meeting Date	The next SEAC meeting date is Monday, April 8, 2013, 7-9pm, Boardroom, 5050 Yonge St.	

**Special Education Advisory Committee
Chief Academic Officer's Report – Sandy Spyropoulos
March 4, 2013**

Director's update

A commitment to maintaining stability, accountability and increasing public confidence continues to be the focus of our work. The Director has been attending regional Principal meetings to engage administrators in discussions and hear directly about how students, staff and communities can be supported further so that everyone meets with success.

Release of Grade 7-12 Student Census

The findings from the 2011-2012 Student Census were released on February 12, 2013. As stated in the media release, close to 90% - or 103,000 grade 7-12 students participated in the census making the size and scope of its findings important to informing how communities support youth inside and outside the classroom. Over the next six months, the TDSB will release detailed analyses of several themes in the census. This includes a breakdown of social and emotional well-being data that was included for the first time in the census and looks at the mental health needs of students across Toronto.

A presentation of the findings will be made to SEAC by the Research department at the April meeting.

Caring and Safe Schools – “The Accepting Schools Act” – Bill 13

Important Changes to Operational Procedure PR. 540: Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers, PR.585: School Code of Conduct and PR.697: Consequences of Inappropriate Student Behaviour have been made so that the Board is in compliance with the requirements in Bill 13, The Accepting Schools Act. Ted Libera, the Central Co-ordinating Principal for Caring and Safe Schools will attend a future SEAC meeting to review these changes.

Funding To Support Purchase of New or Updated Educational Equipment and Resources for Students in Care, Treatment, Custody and Correctional (CTCC) Programs

The Ministry of Education has provided one-time funding to support greater technology use in Educational Programs in Care, Treatment, Custody and Correctional Facilities (CTCC programs). The funding is to be used to purchase new or updated educational equipment and resources.

The purpose of the funding is to support student learning, achievement and well-being in CTCC programs through the purchase of new or updated educational equipment and resources. This would include, but not limited to, computers, software, internet connectivity, access to e-learning resources, specialized IT equipment such as interactive whiteboards, shipping, technical training/support and specialized equipment and resources for Francophone students and student who are First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

School boards are to spend the funding, in accordance with the Transfer Payment Agreement, by March 28, 2013.

Staff Allocation

The Board has a projected structural deficit of \$55 million dollars; consequently, savings of \$3.5 million dollars have been realized through a reduction of Special Education staff. This year we will be allocating 1,657.5 elementary teachers, 546 secondary teachers and 2486 support staff as per the School-Based Staff Allocation report put forward for approval at the March 6, 2013 Board meeting.

Summer School 2013– Developmental Disability, Physical Disability, Deaf/Hard of Hearing Programs

The Special Education Summer School programs will run from July 3 to July 26. Student applications have been sent out and close on April 11th. Offers of placement will take place on April 26th. The delivery model of our summer school programs for this coming year will be the same as last year.

We have attached a survey to the student applications to consult with parents on proposed possible changes to the Special Education summer school model currently being offered. For example, lengthening the day and shortening the duration of the programs are some possible considerations.

World Autism Awareness Day – April 2

World Autism Awareness Day was declared by the United Nations in 2007. Some of our schools will be participating this year in the “Raise the Flag” campaign on April 2nd in honour of this important day which shines a light on and celebrates the unique talents and skills of people with autism, while recognizing the significance of early diagnoses and intervention.

APPENDIX #2: System Superintendent's Report

Special Education Advisory Committee System Superintendent's Report - Cindy Burley March 4, 2013

Early Reading Intervention

On February 12, Educational Assistants from 20 schools received their initial ERI training, bringing the number of trained EAs to over 140. The training binder has now includes even more resources and tools that facilitate program implementation and it is set up so that it is ready for participants to use the next day.

Professional Learning for Central Special Education Staff

On March 1, our central Special Education staff held a professional learning session presented by the Behaviour Regional Services staff that focused on supporting students with behavioural challenges. Topics included: Positive Behaviour Supports and Solution-Focused Problem-Solving.

Aspergers Full Day Workshop

On February 22, our Autism Team together with Surrey Place had a practical strategies-based workshop for secondary schools to address the needs of students with Aspergers. Approximately 40 teachers participated.

Professional Learning for the System

On February 25, the Superintendents of Education received an overview of Target Ten data and next steps that could be considered for many of their schools. Many of them are following up with Family of Schools level sessions for their principals led by our consultants and coordinators.

During February, we also held professional learning sessions for our staff on the topic of Special Education needs in our secondary schools. This session will followed up by sessions for Curriculum Leaders and Assistant Curriculum Leaders from our secondary schools. Topics included: the effective and appropriate use of accommodations, how to set up General Learning Strategies courses and Resource Rooms.

APPENDIX #3: Professional Support Services Report

Special Education Advisory Committee Professional Support Services – David Johnston March 4, 2013

Suicide Prevention/Intervention

On February 19th, 2013, the Ministry of Education announced that funding was going to be made available to support District School Boards in the area of Suicide Prevention and Intervention, and that these funds needed to be allocated by March 28, 2013.

The Professional Support Services had already initiated plans in this area, and this funding opportunity proved to be a timely financial support. This will allow us to provide increased professional learning opportunities that enhance awareness and build capacity in the area of suicide prevention. Over time, the goal is that more educators, non-teaching staff and professional support staff will be better equipped to recognize and prevent the immediate risk of suicide in students presenting with suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

Prior to the end of this school year, workshops and training will be provided to school administrators, school staff, parents and Professional Support Services staff. To help us accomplish this, Dr. Ian Manion, Executive Director, Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health and Dr. Stan Kutcher, Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health have agreed to work with us on this initiative.

In addition, we are developing a plan that will build long-term staff capacity that will deliver a consistent message and will create common understandings through a system-wide approach in this area.

Cyber Bullying Research Study

The Toronto District School Board is participating in a major research initiative which is being funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. This is a 3 year study, entitled, “Motivations for Cyber Bullying: A Longitudinal & Multi-Perspective Inquiry.”

The Principal Investigators include Dr. Faye Mishna (Dean of the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto), Dr. Debra Pepler (York University), and Dr. Wendy Craig (Queen’s University). Nineteen TDSB schools are participating in the study with a total of 671 students. Students in grade 4 (157 students), grade 7 (246 students), and grade 10 (248 students) are participating with questionnaires being completed by students, parents and teachers. The preliminary results from year one are just being tabulated.

An initial unexpected result was the level of distress being reported by the students in this area. Students in distress were identified either through a student requesting to meet with a member of the research team or through their responses to the questionnaires that they completed. A total of 117 students were identified as being in distress, this represents about 17% of the participating students.

All of these students were interviewed and appropriate referrals and supports were initiated. Additional information on other aspects of this study will be shared as results become known.

Service Statistics
February 2013

	Psych.	Social Work	Attend.	SLP	OT/PT	Child & Youth Services
Referrals	6948	5855	1718	4616	1138	1232
Completed	3458	115	263	2029	347	92
Wait List	2054	227	70	1114	48	0
In Progress	1038	5740	1455	1356	1016	1140

