



# Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Meeting

## MINUTES

November 4, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.  
5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom

Members Present: Diana Avon, Clovis Grant, Richard Carter, Heather Breckenridge, Steven Lynette, Paul Cross, John Hastings, Howard Kaplan, Jean-Paul Ngana, Aline Chan, Debra Hayden, Sam Sotiropoulos, Yama Arianfar, Christina Buczek  
 Alternates Present: Oksana Romanov, Judy Moir  
 Regrets: Ginny Pearce, Gal Koren, Michelle Brick, Nancy Turner Wright, Olga Ingrahm, Phillip Sargent  
 Staff Present: Sandy Spyropoulos, Cindy Burley, David Johnston, Margo Ratsep, John Manalo  
 Recorders: John Manalo and Margo Ratsep

Item	Business
1.	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7:04 p.m. on Monday, November 4, 2013, in the Boardroom, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario with Chair Steven Lynette presiding.</p>
2.	<p>Approval of the Agenda</p> <p>***Motion: Richard Carter moved that the Agenda be approved. The motion carried.</p>
3.	<p>Declarations of Possible Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were noted.</p>
4.	<p>Confirmation of Minutes of October 7, 2013</p> <p>***Motion: Paul Cross moved that the Minutes of October 7, 2013 be approved. The motion carried.</p>
5.	<p>Delegations and/or Presentations</p> <p>Tim Myrden, Central Coordinator – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Programs presented information about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs in the Toronto District School Board and provided a handout.</p>
6.	<p>Business Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>PIAC/SEAC Parent Conference – Clovis Grant reported on the PIAC/SEAC Parent Conference called “<i>Empowering Families through Knowledge and Networking</i>”. He thanked the many SEAC representatives and Special Education staff who volunteered their time for this conference. There were 270 pre-registrations, 183 attendees and 47 additional participants who came on the day of the conference. The overall feedback was positive, especially about the opportunity to speak with TDSB staff. Seventy-two respondents suggested that this conference take place annually. Other suggestions included improved communication to parents and changes to the structure of the day, for example longer workshops and networking sessions in separate rooms.</p> <p>Sandy Spyropoulos, Executive Superintendent acknowledged the efforts of the many volunteers, including 15 TDSB staff, members from SEAC and PIAC and Carolyn Anco, Education Officer from the Ministry of Education and shared feedback. Jean-Paul Ngana will take input back to the Steering Committee for future consideration.</p>

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<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Trustees' Reports</b></p> <p>Trustee Hastings extended personal thanks to TDSB staff who participated in the PIAC/SEAC Parent Conference, noting one exemplary workshop he attended, with TDSB presenter Chief of Psychology – Area D, Dr. David Schwartzbein.</p> <p>He reported that the Wednesday Board meeting will consider a motion that will focus on mathematics from JK to Grade12.</p> <p>On November 26<sup>th</sup>, Director Donna Quan will be at Humberwood Community School to speak about the “Years of Action”.</p> <p>Trustee Kaplan reported that members of the TDSB Health and Mental Well-Being Committee met with City Planning Department staff to discuss an Active Transportation charter. An Active Transportation Summit for parents and students is planned for November 20th at St. Lawrence Hall at King and Jarvis.</p> <p>Trustee Sotiropoulos reported on the Ward Council meeting last week, with Director Donna Quan and Executive Director Catherine Parsonage of the Toronto Foundation for Student Success. In the last school year, Toronto Foundation for Student Success supported vision and hearing screenings for over 26,000 students in the TDSB.</p> <p>Trustee Sotiropoulos also mentioned that school zone traffic and safety is being addressed with the City of Toronto. SEAC members were invited to submit ideas to take forward to a joint working group. Richard Carter suggested a strategy used in Salt Lake City and Christina Buczek suggested using secondary students as volunteers at local elementary school crossings to fulfil their 40 hours of community service.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Executive Superintendent's Report</b></p> <p>Sandy Spyropoulos submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes. <i>(See pages 4 to 5)</i></p> <p>***Motion: Howard Kaplan moved to extend the meeting to 15 minutes. The motion carried.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>System Superintendent's Report</b></p> <p>Cindy Burley submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes <i>(See page 6 to 7)</i></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Professional Support Services Report</b></p> <p>David Johnston submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes <i>(See pages 8 to 9)</i></p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Reports/Updates from SEAC Subcommittees</b></p> <p>There were no SEAC Subcommittee reports.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>SEAC Member Association Reports</b></p> <p>Down Syndrome Association of Toronto (DSAT) – Richard Carter reported on the Mayor's announcement about Down Syndrome Awareness Week, taking place from November 1 to 7, 2013 and provided information about related events from the DSAT website.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>Correspondence Received by the Chair</b></p> <p>The following correspondence was received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email dated October 8, 2013 from Jennifer Story re: French Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) and Special Education</li> <li>• Email dated October 11, 2013 from Judy Moir, Chair, Board of Directors of the Brain Injury</li> </ul>

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	<p>Society of Toronto, re: New Representation on SEAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email dated October 18, 2013 from Lillian Wagman re: Question on Teacher Certification</li> <li>• Email dated October 22, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Thank You</li> <li>• Email dated October 22, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Conference Follow-up</li> <li>• Email dated October 27, 2013 from Lillian Wagman re: Question on Teacher Certification</li> <li>• Email dated November 4, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Sharing Information for Action</li> </ul>
14.	<p>New Business</p> <p><b>***Motion: Diana Avon moved that, in support of the October communication from the Brain Injury Society of Toronto, SEAC recommend that the Board appoint Cynthia Sprigings as new representative for Brain Injury Society of Toronto, in place of Dr. Robert Gates, who has retired. The motion carried.</b></p>
15.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p><b>***Motion: Trustee Kaplan moved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.</b></p>

## Executive Superintendent's Report

Submitted by: Sandy Spyropoulos

November 4, 2013

### DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

In the Director's Leadership Update presented at the October 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, Director Quan spoke about "an agenda of ACTION in the year ahead" – one based on "demonstrated and accountable ACTION to support a stronger focus on Education for Sustainable Development". She spoke about an "Action Plan that will include a relentless focus on ways to strengthen and improve educational outcomes and student achievement for all students, realistic fiscal responsibility and active parent and community participation".

To that end, staff has been working on the 2013-2014 TDSB Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement K-Grade 12+ and their respective department plans.

Further in that update, Director Quan outlined several strategies and elaborated on two:

1. Talent Growth and Succession Planning which speaks to "staff at all levels having opportunities to maximize their potential and to contribute in purposeful and accountable ways" and;
2. Quality Service Standards which "will be an expectation across all departments and in all schools. Standards related to access to and accuracy of information and response time, along with courteous and welcoming service from all staff".

### IEP DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

As of October 30, 2013, there were **44,918** IEPs in progress across the TDSB. As you know, our web-based application provides the opportunity for us to generate reports to monitor the status of IEP development both at the school level and centrally.

Of these **44,918** IEPs that have been developed:

**28,656** are for male students and **16,262** are for female students. This is consistent with percentages reported at this time last year – 64% male and 36% female.

Approximately **47% (21,066)** of students with IEPs are exceptional and **53% (23,852)** do not have an exceptionality.

Approximately **62%** of students are supported in the Resource program and **38%** in HSP and ISP classes.

Of those students who are exceptional, **42%** are supported in the Resource program and **58%** are supported in HSP or ISP classes.

Of those students who are not exceptional, **81%** are supported in the Resource program and **19%** are supported in HSP or ISP classes.

Grade level distribution shows that the greatest numbers of IEPs are for students in grade **12 (5721)**, **grade 8 (4361)**, **grade 7 (4204)**, **grade 5 (4201)** and **grade 6 (4126)**. These same grade levels were in the top five last year as well, although with a slightly different distribution. The lowest numbers are for students in **kindergarten (817)** and **grade 1 (881)** which are relatively consistent with last year.

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### IEP AND IPRC INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Two sessions will be held on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013 between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm, one in the East at 140 Borough Drive in the Council Chambers on the main floor and one in the West at 1 Civic Centre Court in the Boardroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. This information has been communicated to Superintendents and Principals to inform their parents and has been posted on the external “Community” section of the TDSB website under “How to Get Involved/Conferences”.

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/HowtoGetInvolved/Conferences.aspx>

### IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE (IPRC) UPDATE

The Special Education Department has made a commitment to provide professional development on an annual basis to those who sit as members on our Family of Schools IPRCs. Thursday November 7, the IPRC steering committee will facilitate its 7th such gathering. First and second year IPRC members, along with some experienced members will attend a session that provides an opportunity for new members to engage in discussions about their role while in the company of experienced colleagues. The session focuses on IPRC decision-making within the context of Learning For All, the regulatory responsibilities of IPRCs to first consider regular class placement before considering a special education class and the continuum of support available through the Community Based Resource Model (CBRM) in elementary schools. As is done every year, the changes to the relevant sections of the TDSB Special Education Report that pertain to IPRC decision-making will be outlined and discussed. It is our belief that these professional development opportunities provide a significant opportunity for mentorship and so the majority of time will be spent in small work groups. This will give participants the opportunity to discuss their particular roles with colleagues who share it and to simulate the IPRC/SEPRC experience while coming to a better understanding of the perspectives of the other members of the Committee.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION INCLUSION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Special Education Inclusion Committee is beginning its second year of work. The first year was dedicated to analyzing the information from the Town Hall meetings and from SEAC, and researching models of inclusion in other Boards, jurisdictions and countries. The committee members, along with the research department examined various sources regarding inclusion. Following this the research department compiled and shared a literature review with the committee at the September 2013 meeting. Committee members continue to review and share resources related to inclusion.

The committee focus for the 2013-2014 school year is to develop a survey for the system that will gather information that will act as a base-line regarding inclusion practices in the TDSB. The survey will also act as a vehicle to collect best practices in TDSB schools.

### “A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA –SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH” (DRAFT)

The Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) staff has drafted a brochure that provides information of different organizations by Ward in each of the following areas: Health and Wellness, Housing, Education, Financial Support and New to Canada. A template will be sent to SEAC members to add their organization/agency information to be included in this brochure.

## System Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Cindy Burley

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013

### **Professional Learning for Central Special Education Staff**

On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Central staff were presented with the Toronto District School Board Grade 3, 6, 9 and 10 EQAO results, as well as the Board Improvement Plan. Central staff also completed an analysis of FOS EQAO data submissions, utilizing guiding questions in order to identify current areas of need for the FOS they support. Staff developed tiered support plans in order to meet the areas of need outlined by the data reviewed and in preparation for their October 24<sup>th</sup>, FOS sessions.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, central Special Education staff participated in a professional learning session which focused on the use of Assistive Technology, in order to build capacity in Central staff and prepare them to best support further professional learning in their Family of Schools.

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, Central Staff also met in exceptionality based groups in order to begin the process of creating exemplary IEPs and Transition Plans for Toronto District School Board staff to begin to utilize as of September 2014, in line with Ministry PPM #156, Supporting Transitions For Students With Special Needs. Many more sessions are planned for the duration of this school year.

### **Professional Learning for Special Education Teachers**

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, Family of Schools Consultants and Coordinators facilitated professional learning sessions which focused on the differentiated needs of each of the schools in their FOS. Staff continued their work on the Board Improvement Plan, by including an analysis of EQAO data, and Target Ten Submission to date as part of their October 24<sup>th</sup> FOS professional learning session with MARTs/CLs/ACLs.

### **Early Reading Intervention**

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 18 new schools will be attending the Early Reading Intervention Program training. School teams will consist of an educational assistant, a grade 1 teacher and several administrators. These school teams will participate in a one-day workshop facilitated by the team of ERI trainers, consisting of central and school-based Special Education staff. The ERI program supports at-risk grade 1 students with daily support from a trained educational assistant.

### **Consultation on Alternative Curriculum**

TDSB Central Special Education staff, school-based staff and a SEAC representative participated in a Ministry consultation about programming for our students on alternative curriculum. Updates will be shared when they become available.

### **Transition Planning Protocol for Young People With A Developmental Disability**

The tri-ministry protocols outline an agreement between community organizations and school boards on how they will work together to help support the transition of a young person with a developmental disability to adulthood. The protocols build on existing regional transition processes to provide a more consistent and coordinated approach to supporting young people's transition to adulthood. The protocols specify that:

- every young person with a developmental disability will have a single integrated transition plan that will inform educational planning and help the young person transition from secondary school and child-centred services to adulthood;
- planning will begin early; and
- transition planning processes will be integrated, consistent, and transparent.

Integrated transition planning is for young people (age 14 and older) who meet the definition of having a developmental disability under any of the EDU, MCSS and MCYS legislation frameworks or agency criteria.

Our Low Incidence staff will be reviewing the protocol and will share next steps in the future.

## Professional Support Services Report

Submitted by David Johnston  
November 4, 2013

### Research

Researchers from the University of Ottawa have received approval from the TDSB External Research Review Committee to conduct an evaluation of the "Let's Talk: Finding Reliable Mental Health Information and Resources" program. This program has been developed to help Grades 7-8 students recognize, locate and evaluate reliable mental health information and resources.

This program consists of both teacher training and the implementation of three specific lesson plans for students in Grades 7-8 (Setting the Record Straight: Authenticating Mental Health Information Online, Setting the Record Straight: Public Service Announcements on Mental Illness, and Social Support Networks and Help-Seeking). Classroom resources will be available online as well as in printed kits.

The results of the evaluation will be used for program improvement prior to the national expansion of the program in 2014. The evaluation will focus on both program process and delivery (e.g., program implementation and structure) program content (e.g., training/teaching materials) and short and intermediate term outcomes at both the level of teachers (e.g., satisfaction with training program, level of knowledge from training program, intention to implement the program, how materials were used and the fidelity to which they adhered to suggested model) and students (e.g., level of participant knowledge, skills and awareness as it relates to internet authentication skills, de-stigmatizing attitudes, demystifying formal help-seeking behaviours, etc.).

### Training in Dealing with Non-Suicidal Self-Injury of Students

Several sessions were held on October 31 and November 1, 2013 on Non-Suicidal Self-Injury ("Self Harm", "Cutting"). These sessions were hosted by the Toronto District School Board in conjunction with the Student Support Leadership Initiative. The presenters were two nationally recognized leaders in the field, Dr. Stephen Lewis (University of Guelph) and Dr. Nancy Heath (McGill University). On October 31, over 250 people attended 2 half day sessions for school personnel (including administrators, teachers, and Mental Health nurses) that focused on increasing knowledge and awareness on the topic. On November 1, 300 mental health professionals (e.g. social workers, psychology staff, child and youth services) attended a full day session on assessment and intervention for youth evidencing non-suicidal self-injurious behaviour. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and there is increased awareness and confidence as we work with young people in this area.

Dr. Heath and Dr. Lewis have developed a website with valuable information for individuals struggling with this issue and professionals who work in the field, <http://www.sioutreach.org/>

### Professional Involvements

**Sharon McWhirter**, Chief of Speech-Language Pathology (West Region) has been appointed by the Minister of Education, Liz Sandals, to represent Speech-Language Pathology Services on the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education.



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**Paul O'Connell**, Chief of Psychological Services (Area A) has been appointed to the Ontario Psychological Association Liaison Committee to the Ministry of Education, Special Education Branch.

**Christine Gaitens**, Chief of Child and Youth Services is now President of the Ontario Association of Child and Youth Counsellors.

**Robert Gauthier**, Psychological Associate on the Autism Team has been elected President of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.

## Service Statistics October 2013

	Psych.	Social Work	Attend.	SLP	OT/PT	Child & Youth Services
Referrals	4592	2336	643	2867	564	502
Completed	2071	8	107	942	21	11
Wait List	1746	231	30	780	83	0
In Progress	733	2332	536	1079	471	491

