



**Committee Name:** Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

**Date:** Monday, September 21, 2015

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Paula Boutis, Alexander Brown, Richard Carter, Aline Chan, Paul Cross, Catherine Drillis, Tiffany Ford, Jordan Glass, Clovis Grant, Nora Green, Olga Ingrahm, Howard Kaplan, Lisa Kness, David Lapofsky, Steven Lynette, Diane Montgomery, Jean-Paul Ngana, Phillip Sargent,

**Regrets:** Adebukola Adenowo-Akpan, Diana Avon, Deborah Fletcher, Margarita Isakov, Mark Kovats, Michelle McDonald, Cynthia Sprigings, Ken Stein

**Staff:** Uton Robinson, Jeff Hainbuch, Ian Allison, Margo Ratsep

**Guests:** David Haffner, TDSB East Region Chief of Speech-Language Pathology Services; Anne Ricci, TDSB Chief of Occupational/Physiotherapy Services

**Recorder:** Margo Ratsep

ITEM	DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATIONS / MOTIONS	DECISION
1. Call to Order/Quorum	A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7:00 pm on Monday, September 21, 2015 in the Board Room, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario with Steven Lynette presiding as Chair.	
2. Approval of Agenda	<b>Motion:</b> Clovis Grant moved that the agenda be approved.	Motion carried.
3. Declaration of Possible Conflicts of Interest	None noted.	
4. Confirmation of Minutes	<b>Motion:</b> Paula Boutis moved that the Minutes of the June 1st, 2015 meeting be approved.	Motion carried
5. Presentations/Delegations	<p><b>Presentations/Delegations/Consultations</b></p> <p>Guests David Haffner (Chief of Speech-Language Pathology Services – TDSB East Region) and Anne Ricci (TDSB Chief of Occupational/Physiotherapy Services) presented information about the Toronto Region Special Needs Strategy Proposal for Integrated Rehab Services (IRS). The proposal proposes ways of integrating services for occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech-language pathology. This consultation was in follow-up to last year’s input and advocacy by SEAC with the three Ministries involved. Additional feedback and input is invited in this consultation.</p> <p>The presenters expressed their hope that the proposed model facilitates the kinds of tiered interventions TDSB pilots have found to be effective and efficient, including both consultation and</p>	

direct assistance. With tiered intervention and depending on goals, group sizes vary between large group, small group and individual interventions for more complex students who have more than one disability (i.e. cognitive delay and physical disability). The focus is on providing interventions tailored to the needs of the child. All of the regional IRS proposals are due at the end of October and roll out would likely be for September 2016.

The presenters encouraged SEAC members and member associations to complete the Family and Stakeholder Survey and spread the word among their family contacts to also do so. The survey is posted at: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TO\\_SNS\\_Feedback](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TO_SNS_Feedback)

SEAC members gave the following input:

1. There are concerns about any plan that requires staff without professional training to implement rehabilitative recommendations and deliver services – it will be important that there be sufficient funding for schools to have access to an appropriate degree of training to carry out OT/PT or Speech-Language recommendations.
2. It is important that the issue of wait-times be addressed through adequate funding and staffing levels. Wait-times shouldn't depend on where you live or which CCAC is involved.
3. It is important that services be provided in as inclusive and integrated environment as possible.
4. There is understanding that consultative services are important and that direct service is not necessary all the time. Following assessment, there must be time for modelling and working with the student and teacher to develop the skillset, time to practice and reassess progress.
5. Given that there are 5 CCACs working with TDSB and that every CCAC operates differently (with different admission criteria, different forms, etc.), it is important that all 5 come together and try to make services as consistent, effective and efficient as possible.
6. It is important that effective use be made of assistive technology (such as iPad or other kinds of tablets, apps, etc.) at both home and school. Continued focus in this area needs to be facilitated and adequately funded.

A question was raised about TDSB practices around providing continued Speech-Language intervention when an exceptional student moves from an intensive support program (ISP) to an integrated, regular class setting. An example was given in which previous goals related to language development were excluded from a student's IEP when the student moved from an ISP to an integrated setting. The presenters confirmed that it is expected that the language goals would continue to be included in the IEP. For instance, if the student required visual supports for decision making, those would continue regardless of where the student was placed.

The presenters undertook to provide a copy of their presentation notes to SEAC members.

Recognition and welcome was given to the Chair of the Board, Trustee Robin Pilkey, who was in attendance.

<p><b>6. SEAC Business &amp; Open Discussion</b></p>	<p><b>SEAC Priority Setting for 2015-2016</b></p> <p>David Lepofsky spoke on behalf of the SEAC Priorities Working Group, speaking to a draft list of priorities and a draft Action Plan for SEAC to consider. While examples are provided in both documents, more can be included. On behalf of the Working Group, he proposed that SEAC discuss and approve the Priority list as a starting point and then discuss and adopt an Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Discussion on Priorities</b></p> <p>Members offered the following input during discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure flexibility to adjust SEAC attention when something arises that requires it.</li> <li>2. Map the priorities in coordination with board priorities, so SEAC can provide timely input and work with the board proactively</li> <li>3. Parents should know what options are available and what the bottom line is. There is a need for something like a “Rules Book” – a condensed version of information about different exceptionalities – to help parents, teachers and administrators understand what the system offers by way of support. It would be helpful to understand the criteria used for recommendations for placement in intensive support programs. There is a need for simplified explanations, available on line, long before parents are even in school.</li> <li>4. TDSB needs to make its information more transparent and accessible. For example, the Parent Guide is inaccessible to parents with vision difficulties.</li> <li>5. Parents need to know Pathways for students in special education. Families want to know what the potential pathway is for different program decisions, and it needs to be in parent friendly language.</li> <li>6. Move Priority item 2(e) up to Priority 1 since Transition Plans are part of the IEP</li> <li>7. The Special Education Plan should not limit the focus of SEAC. The focus should be on what is important for families and kids.</li> <li>8. The issue is transparency and clarity for what the board can do. Parents would like to see a document that helps them understand what services parents can expect the board to typically provide to meet the specific needs of their children.</li> </ol> <p>***Motions: David Lepofsky</p> <p>That SEAC adopt the statement of four priorities as the current statement of priorities, understanding that changes and additions can be made at any time. All were in favour.</p> <p>That SEAC assume a consensus decision to start with Priority 1, and to review the Special Education Plan to see what it should be, rather than what it is. Given the passage of meeting time and business yet to be done, Chair Steven Lynette suggested that members take away this discussion, to make the decision next meeting.</p> <p>A request was made to post the draft priorities on line. Margo Ratsep undertook to do so.</p>	<p>Motion carried</p> <p>Motion deferred</p>
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<p><b>11. Correspondence</b></p>	<p>SEAC received the following correspondence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application dated 8 June 2015 from Dick Winters for membership as SE Alternate Community Representative</li> <li>2. Email dated 2 Sept 2105 from Cathy Persons on behalf of the CP-NET organizing committee to extend an invitation to the CP-NET Science &amp; Family Day Open House (<i>Interested parties to contact: <a href="http://cpnet.canchild.ca/en/">http://cpnet.canchild.ca/en/</a></i>)</li> <li>3. Email dated 9 Sept 2015 from Melissa Ray, Director of Camp Concord/Concord in the City re Presenting to SEAC on a special needs day program for adults who have aged out of high school</li> </ol>	
<p><b>12. Member Announcements</b></p>	<p>The following member announcements were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members received a handout about Autism Ontario evening supporting autism – October 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>2. Community Living Seeking Solutions Marketplace – October 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>3. Next Tuesday Sept 29<sup>th</sup> – All candidate’s evening at Ryerson on disability issues (limited enrollment – rsvp required)</li> <li>4. Saturday October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1 pm – Disability Pride March</li> </ol>	
<p><b>13. New Business</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommendation to the board: SEAC Community Alternate Representative for SE  <b>*** MOTION</b> On motion of Richard Carter:  <i><b>Whereas there are two vacancies for South East Community <u>Alternate</u> Representative on the Toronto District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and, Whereas Dick Winters has applied for and meets board criteria for this vacancy and, Whereas no other applications have been received, SEAC recommends that the Toronto District School Board appoint applicant Dick Winters to the board’s SEAC as a South East Community <u>Alternate</u> Representative for the term ending November 30, 2018.</b></i></li> <li>2. Margo Ratsep spoke to two items related to community representative alternates, recommending that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence Coverage for Community Representatives by the two available alternates be organised by region so that the SW alternate cover for all West region community reps and the East be similarly covered by the one alternate (once appointed)</li> <li>• SEAC permit the non-voting participation of Alternates at meetings, even when they are not attending as a replacement for a community representative</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Motion carried</p> <p>Item 2 discussion and decision deferred to October meeting</p>

<p><b>14. Agenda Setting</b></p>	<p><b>October 5</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Special Education Budget (Craig Snider, TDSB Comptroller) – A request was made to provide presentation information in advance, not as a PPT but as a word document in an accessible and user friendly format; Margo undertook to resubmit SEAC questions to Mr. Snider</li> <li>2. SEAC Priority Setting and Action Plan</li> <li>3. Special Education Plan</li> <li>4. Coverage by and Participation of Community Rep Alternates</li> </ol> <p><b>Future Presentation/Consultation Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistive Technology Strategy</li> <li>• Sense of Belonging Research</li> <li>• Special Education Support Staff</li> <li>• Refusal to Admit, Suspensions and Expulsions</li> <li>• Mental Health Strategy</li> <li>• Executive Summary – results from the PPM 140 Survey (Jan Fukumoto, Central Coordinator for ASD Programs)</li> <li>• Census Data</li> </ul>	
<p><b>15. Adjournment</b></p>	<p>Richard Carter moved adjournment at 9:25</p>	<p>Motion carried</p>

**Future Meeting Dates:** October 5, November 2, December 14, January 11, 2016 (to be confirmed)

## Uton Robinson – Special Education Department Update

Welcome to the 19<sup>th</sup> school year of the TDSB. We are excited by the opportunities we will have to support student achievement and wellbeing.

We are happy to introduce and welcome Wendy Banhan and Karen Bradley to the Special Education and Section 23 Department. These two Vice-Principals will be working with Central Coordinating Principal Joy Reiter in Section 23 programs.

The Special Education Plan for this school year has been reviewed by Special Education staff to ensure that concerns and edits are accurate and it will be shared with SEAC members for follow-up consultation at the November SEAC meeting..

The In-School Support Team and School Support Team Manual has been revised and is available on line at:

<http://tdsbweb/site/SpecEdSectionViewItem.asp?siteid=100&pmenuid=150&menuid=155&enableNav=true&manualid=5&SectionId=61>

The contents of this manual provide a consistent process to address the needs of students. It is used by IST/SST teams in support of open discussion of student-related strengths and needs within the context of the local school and supports a tiered approach to planning interventions. The majority of students' needs can be met within the local school through the use of universal design for learning, with a tiered intervention approach and differentiated instruction.

### Exploration Classrooms

Each year the Special Education Department tries to offer opportunities for teachers to visit special education programs as a professional learning opportunity. Given the current state of contract negotiations, the timeline this year is to have offerings up and running hopefully by January.

**Census Data Students with Special Needs** – There is census information available about students with special needs. It would be informative for someone from our research team to present this information. The data has good alignment with some of the mentioned priorities that SEAC is proposing.

Completion of IEPs – one of the directives from ETFO is that teachers will not be updating IEPs by the 30<sup>th</sup> day deadline (as per the PPM), but will complete them at their own pace during the school day as part of the provincial action. We will provide an update closer to the October 20, 2015 deadline.

**Jeff Hainbuch : Secondary Gifted Expansion**

In the June minutes, SEAC received information about consultations that were to take place in June at four locations. Invitation was made to 5000 people to attend any of the four consultation meetings located in four regions of the board. These took place, reviewing the placement process for secondary gifted to address equity of access to secondary gifted programs. The intention is to add 4 secondary sites to the existing 6 sites to support equity of access and to address enrolment pressures at Don Mills and Northern. Consultation focused on placement by home address through an IPRC process. Parents will know the projected location for secondary gifted programs and moving forward, a new placement process is planned to be in place for Sept 2016. (Students already in a program will remain to graduation in the current program locations. New sites will offer Grade 9.) Special Education leadership has met with the Toronto School Administrators Association (TSAA), Superintendents of Education, Chiefs of Psychology, and the local feasibility group. A presentation will be made at the October 7<sup>th</sup> PSSC meeting and is going to board October 28<sup>th</sup>. A summary of Q&A will be a public document posted shortly.

**Ian Allison – Update on the Gifted Screening Process**

Ian provided an update to the Gifted Screening Process which was previously introduced and discussed at two SEAC meetings during the 2014-2015 school year. Ian reminded SEAC about the current process where students are considered through teacher and parent nomination, without a pre-screening mechanism. This has resulted in a disproportionate number of students not being identified in some areas of the city while there was a concentration of students identified in other areas. The initial plan was to introduce the new process, using a screening assessment tool for all grade 3 students, in the fall of 2015. A number of issues have since arisen which has delayed the implementation plan. Most notably, the current labour situation has impacted timelines. Given these developments, our department will spend time this year to ensure all steps are in place for fall 2016 implementation. This timeline also aligns with steps taken by our staff supporting Model Schools for Inner Cities, where the annual assessment tool used in the program is being deferred for one year.