

# Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

## Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.  
5050 Yonge Street, Boardroom

Members Present: Yama Arianfar, Diana Avon, Heather Breckenridge, Michelle Brick, Aline Chan, Paul Cross, Clovis Grant, Trustee John Hastings, Olga Ingrahm, Trustee Howard Kaplan, Steven Lynette, Jean-Paul Ngana, Ginny Pearce, Phillip Sargent, Trustee Sam Sotiropoulos, Nancy Turner Wright  
 Alternates Present: Elaine Dodsworth-Lever; Najia Shafi, Nora Green; Cynthia Sprigings  
 Regrets: Christina Buczek, Richard Carter; Debra Hayden, Gal Koren; Judy Moir  
 Staff Present: Sandy Spyropoulos, Cindy Burley, David Johnston, Margo Ratsep, John Manalo  
 Recorders: John Manalo (Parent and Community Engagement) and Margo Ratsep

Item	Business
	6:00 p.m. – Communications Subcommittee Meeting re: TDSB SEAC website pages
1.	Call to Order A meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was convened at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, December 9, 2013 in the Boardroom, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario with Chair Steven Lynette presiding.
2.	Approval of the Agenda ***Motion: Paul Cross moved that the Agenda be approved. The motion carried.
3.	Declarations of Possible Conflicts of Interest No conflicts of interest were noted.
4.	Confirmation of Minutes of November 4, 2013 ***Motion: Clovis Grant moved that the Minutes of November 4, 2013 be approved. The motion carried.
5.	Delegations and/or Presentations Director of Education, Donna Quan presented the “Years of Action 2013-2017”.
6.	Business Arising from the Minutes There was no Business Arising from the November meeting.
7.	Trustees’ Report Sam Sotiropoulos commented on the exemplary practices in inclusion that he observed at Sir John A Macdonald C.I. Howard Kaplan informed SEAC that the budgetary process is beginning with more information forthcoming once the Ontario budget and GSN (Grants for Student Needs) are available.
8.	Executive Superintendent’s Report Sandy Spyropoulos submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes. (See pages 3 to 7) *** Michelle Brick moved to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. The motion carried.
9.	System Superintendent’s Report Cindy Burley submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes (See page 8)
10.	Professional Support Services – Senior Manager’s Report David Johnston submitted a report for inclusion in the minutes (See pages 9 to 11)
11.	Reports/Updates from SEAC Subcommittees (as presented) *** Michelle Brick moved to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. The motion carried.

	<p>Communications Subcommittee:</p> <p>Steve Lynette reported that many of the requested changes to improve the on-line SEAC webpage have been accomplished by the TDSB Communications team and those concerns not yet addressed will take more time and are being worked on. Special Education staff will continue to work with Communications to facilitate changes.</p>
12.	<p>SEAC Member Association Reports (as presented)</p> <p>No member Association reports were submitted.</p>
13.	<p>Correspondence Received by the Chair</p> <p>The following correspondence was received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email dated November 4, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Operational Matters</li> <li>• Email dated November 4, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Sharing Information for Action</li> <li>• Email dated November 4, 2013 from Jerako Biaje re: Sharing Information for Action</li> <li>• Email dated November 6, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re: Correspondences</li> <li>• Email dated November 13, 2013 from Toronto Family Network re Questions Regarding Correspondences</li> <li>• Email dated November 29, 2013 from Gal Koren re: Operational Matters</li> <li>• Email dated December 2, 2013 from Gal Koren re: Operational Matters</li> </ul>
14.	<p>Election of Chair and Vice Chair for January to November, 2014</p> <p>Sandy Spyropoulos assumed position of Chair for the election and reviewed the SEAC election process.</p> <p>There were two nominations for SEAC Chair. Nominees Steven Lynette and Michelle Brick spoke to their nominations. The election proceeded by secret ballot. Ballots were distributed, collected and counted by Margo Ratsep and John Manalo; Sandy Spyropoulos announced the results.</p> <p>Michelle Brick was elected as SEAC Chair for 2014</p> <p>Trustee John Hastings was acclaimed SEAC Vice Chair for 2014</p>
15.	<p>Consideration of Draft 2014 Calendar of Meetings</p> <p>A draft of SEAC meeting dates was reviewed for approval.</p> <p>***Paul Cross moved approval of the Calendar of Meetings. The motion carried.</p>
16.	<p>New Business</p> <p>Paul Cross made reference to the TDSB document PSSC:035A Review of Community Advisory Committees and Workgroups and requested that SEAC members consider this at the January meeting, to provide input for the January Planning and Priorities meeting through Trustee Kaplan.</p> <p>On SEAC's behalf, Sandy Spyropoulos thanked Steve Lynette for his work as SEAC Chair for the past two years.</p>
17.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>***Motion: Ginny Pearce moved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.</p>

# Executive Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Sandy Spyropoulos

December 9, 2013

## Individual Education Plans

### IEP Development Update

As of December 4, 2013, there were **46,599** 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 **46,599** IEPs that have been developed:

**29,659** are for male students and **16,940** are for female students. This is consistent with percentages reported at this time last year – **64%** male and **36%** female.

Approximately **46%** (**21,374**) of students with IEPs are exceptional and **54%** (**25,225**) do not have an exceptionality.

Approximately **63%** of students are supported in the Resource program and **37%** 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** (**5856**), **grade 8** (**4446**), **grade 5** (**4308**), **grade 7** (**4271**) and **grade 6** (**4228**).

The lowest numbers are for students in **grade 1** (**1003**) and **kindergarten** (**927**).

### Parent Information Nights on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

On Tuesday, November 19, 2013 the Special Education Department hosted two information nights for parents outlining the processes involved with the IEP and the IPRC. Approximately 110 people were in attendance at these sessions held in the East and West regions. Parents appreciated receiving the information that was shared and the opportunity to ask questions and to engage department staff in conversation. The information nights will be repeated on Tuesday, February 25, 2014. These sessions have been offered annually for the past 9 years and they continue to be popular.

### Preparation for Annual IPRC (Review) Process

On Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup> Special Education Department staff presented in-service to MARTs and A/CLs regarding the upcoming IPRC (Review) process. The session outlined Ministry and TDSB expectations, roles and responsibilities, time lines, paperwork and helpful tracking procedures. Reviews begin in December/January of each school year to

accommodate the needs of Grade 8 students moving to Grade 9 and to ensure that their special education status is clear before decision-making for secondary school has to be finalized. Reviews continue in the February to April time period for all other students. The significant number of exceptional students in TDSB requires careful planning and preparation for the annual Review process which is why we get such an early start.

### Annual Caring and Safe Schools Reports - 2012-2013/2011-2012

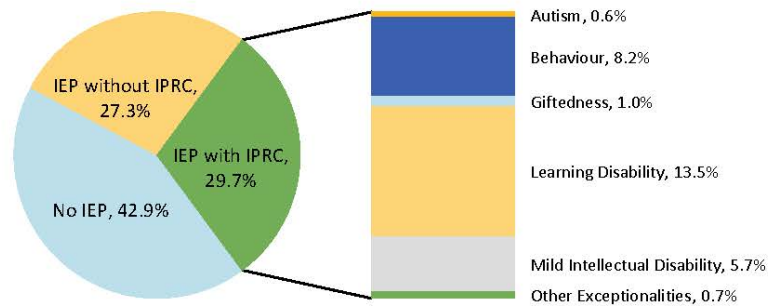
The information below has been extracted from the 2012-2013 and 2011-2012 Annual Caring and Safe Schools Reports and illustrates the comparison of “Suspensions by Status of Special Education Needs”. The full reports can be found on the TDSB website at:

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ElementarySchool/CaringSafeSchools/AnnualReport.aspx>

Figure 5 shows that of the total suspensions given in 2012-13:

- 42.9% were given to students who had no IEP (Individual Education Plan);
- 27.3% were given to students who had an IEP but no identified exceptionalities;
- 29.7% were given to students who had an IEP and an identified exceptionality through the IPRC (Identification, Placement, and Review Committee) process. Learning Disability, Behaviour, and Mild Intellectual Disability are the top three exceptionalities in this category.

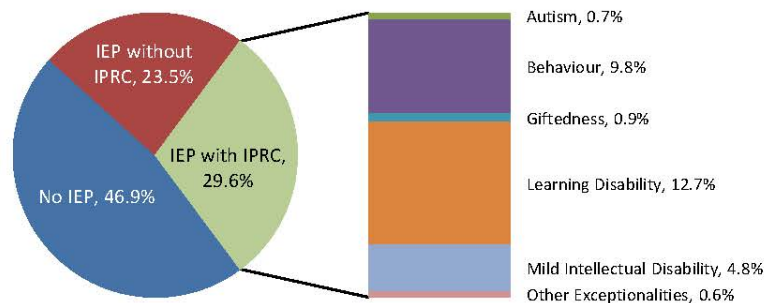
**Figure 5: 2012-13 Suspensions by Status of Special Education Needs**



IEP: Individual Education Plan; IPRC: Identification, Placement, and Review Committee

- 46.9% were given to students who had no IEP (Individual Education Plan);
- 23.5% were given to students who had an IEP but no identified exceptionalities;
- 29.6% were given to students who had an IEP and an identified exceptionality through the IPRC (Identification, Placement, and Review Committee) process. Learning Disability, Behaviour, and Mild Intellectual Disability are the top three exceptionalities in this category.

**Figure 5: 2011-12 Suspensions by Status of Special Education Needs**



IEP: Individual Education Plan; IPRC: Identification, Placement, and Review Committee

## Research Reports on Special Education Needs in the TDSB

Information from the following three research reports and summary overview were shared with SEAC members. The Research Department staff will attend a future SEAC meeting to discuss the reports in more detail:

- Research Reports on Special Education Needs in the TDSB: A Summary
- Special Education in the TDSB and Ontario: An Overview, 2011-13
- The Intersection of Disability, Achievement, and Equity: A System Review of Special in the TDSB
- A Case for Inclusive Education

## Staff Allocation

In accordance with the May 21, 2008 decision by Board for SEAC to receive reports on trends and issues related to program delivery, I am reporting to SEAC on the trends and issues related to delivery of intensive support programs for students with special needs as we begin to allocate staff for 2014-15. Each year the Board approves the special education teacher and support staff allocation. The department allocates approximately:

Elem – 1665.0

Sec – 568.0

Total teachers - 2233

Total support staff – 2486

Each year we determine drivers that will guide the staff allocation process. We will be reviewing and updating the drivers for 2014-2015 Special Education Staff Allocation process in the coming weeks.

The following are the drivers that have been in place for the past several years:

**Equity** - access to programs and services as much as possible in home schools and ISPs as close to home as possible

**Inclusion** - needs-based distribution of elementary Community-Based Resource Model (CBRM) and Secondary Resource allocation to support students in their home schools.

**Clustering** - minimum 2, preferably 3 ISPs of the same or similar exceptionality in one location, to provide opportunities for mutual professional support and enhanced innovative programming and program viability. Where possible, programs for students with a developmental disability will be in clusters of 3 ISPs or in pods of 6 ISPs. Clustering of ISPs will ensure a flow through for students at the same school as they transition between divisions.

**Needs-Based Decision-Making** - staff allocations generated by criteria-referenced formulae and in turn, adjusted minimally to reflect school-based considerations

**Decentralization** - allowances have been made for local flexibility, collaborative decision-making with Family of Schools' (FOS) Superintendents of Education (SOEs) and needs based allocations.

**Accommodation** - special education ISP programs/classes are a key part of the school community and will not be moved out of a school to accommodate the expansion of other programs, such as full day kindergarten or French programs (extended or immersion). In rare cases where the movement of a program is necessary, the program will not be moved without adequate available alternative programs nearby.

**Finding Efficiencies** - build capacity, move toward consistency in practices and communication.

**Minimizing Transitions** - where possible, program location decisions have been made to minimize the number of students who would have to transition to another school due to the move or closure of a program.

**Facility/Program Alignment** - the need to align both existing and new facilities to specific ISP program requirements, in order to maximize access to appropriate facilities that promote student success.

### **Regional Special Education Council Meeting (RSEC)**

Information was shared about SEAC's "Parent Reaching Out" (PRO) Grant initiatives from the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. A presentation explaining the initiatives was provided to the co-chair to be shared at a future SEAC meeting.

### **Accomplishments/Recognitions**

**"It's Hard Not to Stare: Helping Children Understand Disabilities" (Teacher and Parent Guide by Jan Fukumoto, TDSB Co-ordinator, Autism Services).**

Congratulations to Jan Fukumoto who wrote the teacher and parent guide to this book. Jan explained that this book addresses and teaches the value of compassion and understanding disabilities by encouraging children to look at others through this lens rather than that of assumption, judgment or fear. A copy of the book will be provided to each SEAC member.

### **"I Can" Day at Bowmore PS**

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Bowmore P.S. held an "I Can" Day. The day was organized to recognize the annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities which aims to promote an understanding of and advocate for disabled persons. The goal was for students to become more sensitized to the rights and abilities disabled persons have in order to fully take part in and function within society.

The day for students and staff was inspirational. Many of the guest speakers and presenters shared their life stories. They spoke with passion, shared their struggles and accomplishments. Their dynamic storytelling allowed the students and staff to imagine what it might be like to walk in their shoes, feel their pain and joy. Speaker Janique Farand –Taylor left the grade 6, 7 & 8 students with a message to reach deeper each day and strive for their personal best. Principal Thelma Sambrook noted that it was an honour for the staff and students to spend time with and learn from such talented individuals and that the day brought new meaning to the words 'I Can'.

### **Book Launch: “Beverley: The Stories and Artwork of an Exceptional School”**

An invitation was extended to SEAC members to attend the book launch of “Beverley: The Stories and Artwork of an Exceptional School” on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 7 pm to 9 pm at The Faculty of Information, University of Toronto, 140 St. George Street - 4th floor.

Principal Alana Grossman reported that “there were over 200 people in attendance at the book launch and that the book was so well received that they sold out of the first printing and have enough orders to sell out of the second printing. She went on to say, “in some ways this book is transformative by painting pictures of those students who are in the background. To quote Nelson Mandela “To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” These words resonate with me because they speak of the lessons we have learned working with this particular population of students who often have little or no voice. This outpouring of creativity makes such a collection of words, poetry and visual arts connected to this population so timely and extraordinary. For without a written record, whatever it may be, how would we ever know anything about the history of such lives. The CBC interview with Robert Bickford has generated interest from a wide audience of readers and I hope that these stories are shared”.

***Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the Coming New Year!***

# **System Superintendent's Report**

**Submitted by Cindy Burley**

**December 9, 2013**

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

- On November 28, teachers new to their roles in Special Education as MARTs, CLs and ACLs participated in a sessions focusing on IPRC Reviews. This session was Part 2 and gave the teachers a chance to also discuss any concerns, as well as best practices since beginning their new roles in September.
- On November 29, Focus on Success teachers and Child and Youth workers in the northwest section of the city participated in a session looking at best practices as they support secondary students who have social/emotional and behavioural challenges.

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

- Central Special Education staff participated in a refresher session about PR699, the procedure that supports situations that involve students with behavioural challenges. This interactive session focused on the effective development and implementation of safety plans, notification of risk of injury and the use of behaviour logs to track and address challenging behaviours.
- On December 5, Central Special Education staff participated in a refresher session involving our Addressing Anxiety session. As you may remember, Special Education staff together with Professional Support staff co-developed an interactive workshop to address anxiety issues during testing situations.

## **Target Ten**

Once again this year, we are using the Target Ten Strategy to intentionally target and address the needs of students with an Individual Education Plan. Schools select a number of students and report what strategies they are using to support these students. We gather data about the use of assistive technology, the strategies being used to address self-advocacy and challenges around anxiety and executive functioning. As well, we ask schools to tell us about professional development and parent engagement strategies.

## **IEP Workgroups**

As I have previously reported, we are developing IEP exemplars for each of the exceptionalities, using profiles of students who attend our Intensive Support Programs. The first four exemplars for students with a learning disability, students with a mild intellectual disability, students with behavioural challenges and students with developmental disability are almost completed. The samples will include transition plans that will be used during our professional learning sessions for the rollout of PPM 156: Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs.

## **Anxiety Workshop**

On November 13, the Addressing Anxiety workshop was presented to Secondary School Curriculum Leaders and Assistant Curriculum Leaders, who can now take back this information to support students with anxiety challenges and the staff who support them. The development group is now working on Part 2 of this workshop, which will focus on Anxiety and Depression.



# Professional Support Services Report

Submitted by David Johnston

December 9, 2013

## Collaborative Involvements

### ***Toronto Child and Family Advisory Network - Health Committee***

The Health Committee of the Toronto Child and Family Advisory Network is one of four Advisory Committees that support the planning, implementation and monitoring of an integrated system of early learning and care, family support, early identification and intervention and health care for children prenatal to 12 years and their families in Toronto. The Health Committee focuses on addressing integration of primary health care and health promotion into Toronto's early years' system.

Some of the Committee activities include:

- Informing the vision and policies of the Integrated Steering Committee on issues related to prenatal and child health
- Serving as a conduit, communicating information to and from local planning tables, other Committees and the Integrated Steering Committee
- Identifying community needs with respect to preconception health, prenatal health and the health of children 0 to 12 years of age
- Identifying and addressing access to service barriers
- Identifying and applying in a Toronto context best practices related to preconception health, prenatal health and the health of children 0 to 12 years and their families
- Increasing public awareness of the importance of health promotion and prevention and access to quality primary care for prenatal women and children 0 to 12 years.

### ***Child and Youth Advisory Table***

The Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (TC LHIN) has initiated a strategic planning table that is aimed at improving the health and well-being of children and youth, while enhancing the quality, equity, and sustainability of the child and youth health system in the TC LHIN. This group provides ongoing strategy advice and recommendations to the TC LHIN regarding priorities for the child and youth health system.

The priorities that have been identified are:

Improving transitions through the continuum and sectors

Focus on reducing duplication in the system (e.g. multiple wait lists)

Common ways of reporting information across the continuum and sectors

Improving system navigation and coordination

### ***Service Collaboratives***

The Ontario Government's [\*Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy\*](#), is a provincial strategy that commits to reducing the burden of mental illness and addictions by ensuring all Ontarians have timely access to an integrated system of coordinated care. This Open Minds, Healthy Minds strategy is committed to the creation of 18 Service Collaboratives to support coordinated services for children and youth.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is sponsoring the *Systems Improvement through Service Collaboratives* (SISC) initiative to create these Service Collaboratives. These

groups will bring together service providers and other stakeholders from various sectors that interact with children and youth who have mental health and/or addictions problems with a goal of supporting local systems to improve the coordination of, and enhance access to, mental health and addiction services.

CAMH is working with six provincial ministries to ensure the Service Collaboratives' success. They are the:

- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Training, College and Universities;
- Ministry of the Attorney General, and;
- Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

In Toronto there are two Service Collaboratives established related to child and youth mental health.

- The Northwest Service Collaborative focusing on North York and City of York with a particular focus on 4 priority neighbourhoods.
- The Scarborough/East York Service Collaborative focusing on Scarborough and East York and a focus on 8 priority neighborhoods.

### ***City of Toronto Working Group***

In 2012, media coverage of the death of a young newcomer drew attention to the potential for the isolation and abuse of newcomer children, and brought to light coordination gaps between Canada's immigration, settlement and child protection systems. These gaps can contribute to the vulnerability of children, specifically children that are brought to Canada to be reunited with their parent(s) after a long period of separation.

The TDSB was invited to attend a working group with representatives of various agencies across Toronto to examine the issue of the welfare of children of newcomers. The group has met a number of times and developed a series of recommendations that include:

- The working group continue to meet in order to address lack of data and coordination gaps related to services for immigrant children
- Supporting and advocating for the passage of Bill 88 which is recommending that under the Child and Family Services Act the age be raised to 18 from 16 for children and youth qualifying as in need of protection
- Work be undertaken to ensure all newcomer children are enrolled in the school system

## Service Statistics November 2013

	Psych.	Social Work	Attend.	SLP	OT/PT	Child & Youth Services
Referrals	5388	3485	906	3485	842	669
Completed	2775	21	123	1333	70	19
Wait List	1791	202	48	920	111	1
In Progress	805	3464	783	1143	702	649

