**SEAC Meeting Approved Minutes**

**Date: October 8, Time: 7:00 pm**

**Electronic Meeting**

**Committee Chair: David Lepofsky**

**Committee Vice-Chair: Richard Carter**

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| **Attendance**: | Leo Lagnado - Autism Society of Ontario (Toronto Chapter)  Richard Carter- Down Syndrome Association of Toronto (DSAT)  Steven Lynette- Epilepsy Toronto  Nora Green- Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community  Beth Dangerfield – Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada  David Lepofsky- Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)  Tracey O'Regan - Community Living Toronto  Bronwen Alsop- VOICE for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children  Guilia Barbuto- Learning Disabilities Association Toronto District  Trustee Aarts  Diane Montgomery (Alternate)- Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community  Dana Chapman (Alternate)- Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)  Aliza Chaqpar- Easter Seals Ontario  Nerissa Hutchison – Sawubona Afrocentric Circle of Support  Jordan Glass- LC2 Representative  Jean-Paul Ngana- LC2 Representative  Kirsten Doyle- LC3 Representative  Trustee Hassan  Izabella Pruska-Oldenhoff – LC4 Representative  Alana Bell – Association for Bright Children  Trustee Patel  **Staff**  Nandy Palmer- System Superintendent, Special Education and Inclusion  Effie Stathopoulos - Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Susan Moulton- Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Katia Palumbo- Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Alison Board - Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Elizabeth Schaeffer- Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Tanya Hazelton - Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education  Mun Shu Wong- (Audio/Video)  Lianne Dixon- TDSB SEAC Liaison |
| **Regrets**: | Saira Chhibber- LC1 Representative  Louise Sirisko- Associate Director |

* The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair David Lepofsky. A quorum was reached.
* LiveStreaming Announcement: Chair Lepofsky announced that the meeting was being live-streamed via TDSB Live Webcast - Special Education Advisory Committee.
* Declarations of Possible Conflicts of Interests – No conflicts declared.
* LandAcknowledgement**:** Vice Chair Richard Carter delivered the land acknowledgment.
* AgendaReview/Approval: The motion to approve the agenda was proposed by Leo Lagnado and seconded by Nora Green
* Minute Approval – the minutes from September were approved.

**Follow up to June Motion**

With respect to the motion passed June 2024 – Chair Lepofsky attended the recent board meeting and presented the motion asking for the board to require that parents/guardians are made of aware of the resources available to them from the TDSB. This request was referred back to staff.

**Election**

Motion was made to hold the election for SEAC chair for 2025 at the end of the December meeting instead of January as the current chair will be absent in January.

**Motion** –Move the election for Chair and Vice Chair in December?

Nora Green moved the Motion

**Motion Carried**

**Motion - Creating a Fast, Fair and Effective One-Stop Avenue within TDSB for Parents of Students with Disabilities/Special Education Needs Who Believe TDSB is not Accommodating Their Child’s Learning Needs**

The Ontario Government does not require that the Parent Concern Protocol be the only way that parents of students with special education needs can try to have their child’s needs accommodated where they believe TDSB is falling short. – the process is for parents to used whatever the concern, its not tailored to the needs of the parents of Special Needs Students

The K-12 Working Group recommended the Motion (Appendix A)

This motion would be independent of the Parent Concern Protocol

This resolution leaves it open to the staff to design it, and the staff can figure out the details

**Discussion**

Trustee Aarts – the motion is a process that already exists. This is the process of the Parent Concern Protocol. Superintendents are trained in dispute resolution and mediation. Superintendents are the advocates, principals manage the schools, and Superintendents support the principals, and they support the System levels. Parents go through these processes (Parent Concern and IPRC Appeals process). We have this because they are better protocols for the parents.

SEAC members shared the following opinions.

* What’s delivered on paper is not necessarily what’s happening. A different/separate body is a better approach

this motion as he has

* Motion was supported as members have witnessed many experiences from families who have not had any resolution under the Parent Concern Protocol
* The TDSB protocols are in place but not addressed. The current system does not work
* It is difficult to navigate the current process. It’s inefficient, and the TDSB needs help, to resolve the existing process.

**Staff Response**

**Executive Superintendent Nandy Palmer** – in June of 2024 the ministry introduced PPM170 which outlines requirements for how to communicate with parents, and how to provide consistent information to parents. We are reviewing our existing protocols to align our processes with PPM170. This PPM will look at the protocols such as the parent concern protocol and we will look to improve the inefficient protocols.

**Recommendation from K-12 working Group – Motion**

## Creating a Fast, Fair and Effective One-Stop Avenue within TDSB for Parents of Students with Disabilities/Special Education Needs Who Believe TDSB is not Accommodating Their Child’s Learning Needs

Whereas TDSB has at least 40,000 students with disabilities/special education needs.

And whereas TDSB has a duty under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights to accommodate the learning needs of students with disabilities up to the point of undue hardship.

And whereas if a parent/guardian is concerned that TDSB is not delivering accommodations included in the child’s Individual Education Plan, or is otherwise not effectively accommodating their child’s learning needs, they need a swift, user-friendly, independent and fair one-stop avenue that is equipped with the needed expertise for having their concerns addressed.

And whereas the procedures that TDSB now provides, the Concerned Parents Protocol and a human rights complaint to the TDSB Human Rights Office are insufficient. They are not tailored to the needs of students with disabilities/special education needs. They do not assure that the TDSB official addressing the issue has expertise in students with disabilities/special education needs and alternate dispute resolution, and has the authority to implement needed accommodations.

SEAC therefore recommends that:

1. TDSB should establish a prompt, user-friendly, fair and effective process for parents/guardians of students with disabilities/special education needs to seek a resolution if they believe that TDSB is not providing an accommodation for their learning needs that would benefit the student, e.g. if TDSB is not delivering on commitments in the student’s Individual Education Plan or if TDSB has not agreed to provide an accommodation that the parent/guardian believes that the student needs.
2. Staff at TDSB who receive and address a complaint from a parent/guardian of a student with disabilities/special education needs should:
3. Have expertise and experience with education of students with disabilities/special education needs;
4. Be independent of those TDSB staff who have dealt with the student’s needs in issue;
5. Have expertise and training in effective mediation/alternate dispute resolution and
6. Have authority to direct any corrective action that they decide is needed.
7. If, after a review, the TDSB decides not to provide the accommodation that the parent/guardian has requested, TDSB shall give written reasons for this decision.
8. Every effort should be made to mediate and resolve any disagreements between the family and TDSB. If the matter cannot be resolved, there should be an option for TDSB to appoint a person or persons outside TDSB to consider the issue., along short time lines.
9. This process should be designed and carefully tailored specifically for addressing the needs of students with disabilities/ special education needs. It should not also deal with other students’ complaints that are unrelated to disability/special education needs.
10. This motion outlines the principles that should guide the needed process, while leaving flexibility on how it will be designed and operated. This process can be designed so as not to conflict with Ministry requirements. A Parent/care-giver, or the student themselves, can first bring their concerns to their teacher, and then the principal, after which this avenue would be available to them if needed.

Mover: Aliza C

Second the Motion: Leo Lagnado

**Motion: Passed 7:52 p.m.**

**Budget Discussion – Craig Snider**

Last Friday, the Ministry of Education issued the 25-26 Funding Education Guide – attached to your mailout – This is the first year of the funding guide and it outlines the details. Please refer to the guide. An email has been sent to the Trustees with the timeline and has a due date of November 8.

Action Plan:

* All advisory committees please provide your feedback by November 1st.
* On October 22 we will present to FBEC - Budget Development Timeline
* November 9, TDSB will report the funding model to the Ministry
* **SEAC Members** – **please forward your feedback directly to Lianne Dixon who will forward to Craig Snider**

**Town Hall Discussion**

* Discussions will not be recorded.
* Break out rooms will be in effect.
* Note taking will take place by Spec Ed Staff
* Trustees will reach out to families through their newsletter.
* This will not be a session for personal navigation.
* If the event is largely attended, we will consider another Town Hall in the new year
* Lianne Dixon to email a Word Version, a PDF Version and a link to the Town Hall flyer
* SEAC Members – Plan to attend in person and please email Lianne your in-person attendance or online
* Lianne to send a message for all Trustees to communicate the message
* The flyer is already on the main internal and external website
* The flyer will be on the System Leader’s weekly and Direct Line

**Leadership Report**

Executive Superintendent Nandy Palmer shared the Leadership PPT.

Highlights included:

* Professional learning that is planned for2024-25
* Over 600 parents, guardians, and caregivers attended our September 24 Parent Engagement Session
* **Transition Navigator Funding:**
* Navigators – parameters are strict - teaching staff to build capacity of school-based staff.
* OTPT department – who do work for Transitioning will receive funding.
* Secondary administrators with ISPs to start the work in the 9th grade
* Clarification that Ministry funding for Transition Navigator Funding will help students post 21.

**Trustee Report**

* Trustee Aarts suggested the creation of a Calendar Chart indicating important dates, annual updates, and when reports will be made available or coming up in the calendar
* SEAC Members can provide input for this calendar

**Association Report**

October is ADHD month. SEAC members were invited to sign up for the newsletter.

There is an annual conference coming up in Oakville.

Information was shared in the mailout

**Other Business**

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. – motion passed

**NEXT MEETING – November 4, 2024 Town Hall**