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Approved Minutes

**Name of Committee:** Special Education Advisory Committee

**Meeting Date:** March 18, 2025from 7:00 p.m.– 8:45 p.m. (Hybrid)

**Chair:** **David Lepofsky – Chair**

**Vice-Chair:** **Richard Carter - Vice Chair**

A meeting of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee convened on March 18, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. at 5050 Yonge Street, with David Lepofsky (Chair) and Richard Carter (Vice Chair) presiding.

**Attendance:**

**Members**:

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

Diane Montgomery (Alternate)- Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community

Aline Chan (Alternate)- Community Living

Dana Chapman (Alternate)- Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

Bronwen Alsop- VOICE for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children

Stephany Ragnany- (Alternate) VOICE for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children

David Lepofsky- Ontario Parents of Visually Impaired Children (OPVIC)

Nerissa Hutchinson- Sawubona Africentric Circle of Support

Aline Chan (alternate) – Community Living

Aliza Chaqpar- Easter Seals Ontario

Trustee Aarts

Saira Chhibber- LC1 Representative

Jean-Paul Ngana- LC2 Representative

Jordan Glass- LC2 Representative

Kirsten Doyle- LC3 Representative

Izabella Pruska-Oldenhoff – LC4 Representative

**Staff**

Louise Sirisko- Associate Director

Nandy Palmer- System Superintendent, Special Education and Inclusion

Effie Stathopoulos- Centrally Assigned Principal, Special Education

Andrea Roach- 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

Mun Shu Wong- (Audio/Video)

Lianne Dixon- TDSB SEAC Liaison

Regrets :

Guilia Barbuto- Learning Disabilities Association Toronto District

Beth Dangerfield- Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada CADDAC

Tracey O'Regan Community Living Toronto

Trustee Patel

Trustee Hassan

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|  | Item | Discussion | Action Items/Recommendation |
|  | Land Acknowledgement | Richard Carter read the land acknowledgment |  |
|  | Approval of Agenda | Agenda Approval as amended with the addition of the MYSP discussion and motion. | Approval of the agenda Nora Green approved the agenda  Seconded - Leo Lagnado |
|  | Conflicts of interest |  | no conflicts identified |
|  | Approval of Minutes | Approval of minutes was deferred due to a late request for an amendment. They will be presented for approval at the April meeting. |  |
|  | Chair Report | Chairs Report and Update  The Chair will be leaving the meeting at 8 p.m. and Richard Carter will Chair from 8 p.m. to the end.  Chair Lepofsky sent a supplemental report a month and a half ago regarding the Multi Year Strategic Plan (MYSP). He was approached/consulted to represent SEAC at the board’s request at a formal zoom meeting where good discussion took place. Following that meeting, Associate Director Louise Sirisko ran some drafts by him. This will be going to the Board and SEAC needs to comment on the discussion (not available in any written form). The chair’s motion drew on the K-12, students in special education and the MYSP.  At the meeting, Louise Sirisko, updated SEAC that the report is now posted on the Board’s public website. SEAC can see it on the website and it is tracking to the Board on April 2nd  “A strong public education system that promotes full participation by  identifying,removing, and preventing accessibility barriers so that all studentsincludingstudents with disabilities/special education needs and intersecting  identities,are provided with opportunities to realize their full potential”  The following motion was presented to SEAC.  SEAC recommends that the Multi-Year Strategic Plan Objectives must include the following:  To make as much progress as possible towards achieving an accessible and barrier-free public school system for students with disabilities/special education needs, including those with intersecting identities,  A) By removing and preventing accessibility barriers impeding students with disabilities/special education needs from fully participating in, and fully benefitting from all aspects of the education system.  B) By providing a prompt, accessible, fair, effective and user-friendly process to learn about and seek programs, services, supports, accommodations and placements tailored to the individual strengths and needs of each student with disabilities/special education needs. | Motion was moved by………Seconded by ………  Motion was approved and will be sent to the Policy and Priorities Committee. The Chair will present the motion. |
|  | Discussion of report from K12 Working Group  Update on SEPRC  Leadership Report  Trustee Report | The School Board is required to inform parents/guardians/caregivers that they are developing an IEP. Parents are given a letter informing them that their child will have an IEP developed. Parents Guardians caregivers can ask for a meeting to discuss with the board as to what is going to be written in the IEP. There is a concern that the current process does not adequately meet the needs of families who continue to not understand that they can have an IEP meeting.  The Chair asked to go around the room and ask SEAC members to discuss their experiences with this process and give staff an opportunity to respond to the concern.  Suggestions were made including adopting an opt out rather than an opt in approach. SEAC members supported making improvements to the IEP meeting process and shared personal experiences.  System Superintendent Nandy Palmer has taken notes and will take the feedback forward, but it will be considered in the summer. She referred SEAC to the parent guides and added that Communications is providing videos to accompany these guides.  Angela is here today to speak to the outcome of the review and the direction we are taking for the SEPRC.  Angela took feedback from SEAC and was put to task to update the SEPRC – she reached out to SEAC and other school boards and the SEPRC process.  There are five recommendations:  1) All students are given access to regular class per 181/98 – all students are capable learners  2) The SEPRC information in the Spec Ed plan – update and include the duty to accommodate students new to the board  3) Series of mandatory Special Education professional learning for Superintendents of Education, Administrators, Teachers, and Support Staff.  4) Information gathered from the SEPRC meeting before a September entry  5) Create a parent Guide for the SEPRC process  System Superintendent Palmer thanked Angela for the work and the Board intends to implement the recommendations. Timelines: the beginning of the next school year/  Associate Director Louise Sirisko thanked Angela and SEAC for the work that has happened and for ensuring timely access to a SEPRC; we are looking forward to implementing these recommendations  No budget update as Craig Snider will be attending the April SEAC meeting.  Associate Director Louise Sirisko will attend the Budget working group meeting and will work together with the committee.  Some highlights of the report included  We have held our second Parent/Guardian/Caregiver session – AM and PM Sessions about Transitions. These were very well attended, recorded, and posted on the public website.  Ministry and TDSB have been focusing on mathematics and have purchased math kits to develop math strategies (coding curriculum UDL focus design)  Focusing on ASD Afterschool skills development programs in Fall, Spring and summer programs  Awareness Day/Significant dates can be found in the PowerPoint for March – shared in monthly school newsletters and all communication outlets within the TDSB.  Trustee Aarts-  Several meetings are scheduled this week   * FBEC on Tuesday, March 19,   TDSB is on a 3 year recovery plan and must pass a balanced budget but due to the pandemic we do not have reserves.  The coming year is the third and final year of the recovery plan.  FBEC March 19 – will be a discussion of the current financial position and areas where staff will be looking for portions of funds to balance the budget.  Looking at programming not covered under GSN, modifications to Adult learning, outdoor Education and Central Staffing.  GPC meeting on Wednesday – Fundraising policy update and Learning Opportunities Index (determine equitable distribution of funds i.e. socio-economic indicators)  PPC – Meeting Thursday, March 21, 2024, the final draft of the MYSP |  |
|  | Association and Community Updates  Working Group Updates | Working Groups  Associations  Shared a number of upcoming special dates that are highlighted in the powerpoint. |  |
|  | Other Business –  **Next meeting**  April 8 | * Melissa Rosen has resigned from her position as SEAC   Representative from ABC. The vice chair thanked Melissa for her hard work and dedication over the past many years that she has been a member. | Motion to adjourn Nora Green – motion passed |