

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday December 16, 2021 6:30 P.M.

An on-line meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee was held on this date.

ROLL CALL:

Eva Kyriakides, Association for Bright Children (ABC) (SEAC Chair)
sensaRAneb Burrell, Autism Ontario – Durham Chapter
Jenny McLaughlin, Black Parents Support Group
Tara Culley, Durham Down Syndrome Association
Lisa Rankin, Early Years Consortium
Christina Salisbury, Easter Seals Ontario
Rowin Jarvis, Learning Disabilities Association of Durham Region
Carolyn McLennon, Member At Large
Donna Edge-Bean, Member At Large
Elizabeth Daniel, Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders
Kathy Kedey, VOICE for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

Trustees: Donna Edwards Darlene Forbes

Staff: Superintendent, Andrea McAuley
System Lead, Kyla McKee

Recording Secretary: Lisa Wry

1. **Call to Order:**
SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.
2. **Land Acknowledgement:**
SEAC Chair Eva Kyriakides advised that the Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.
3. **DDSB Human Rights & Equity Statement**
The Durham District School Board is committed to learning environments that are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, accessible, inclusive and free from discrimination while placing Human Rights and Equity at the center.
4. **Welcome Guests:** Devika Mathur, Sade Gbalajobi, Braden Sherwood and Conor Jinkinson. Elementary representatives, Dave Robson and Rema Saati, and Secondary representative, Dawn White.

Regrets: Darlene Forbes, Kathy Kedey

Absent: Jenny McLaughlin, Lisa Rankin

5. **Approval of Agenda:**

That the agenda for December 16, 2021 be approved with the Amendment of additional correspondence from the Halton District School Board SEAC.

MOVED BY: Eva Kyriakides

SECONDED BY: Donna Edwards

CARRIED

6. **Approval of the Minutes from November 18, 2021:**

That the minutes from November 18, 2021 be approved

MOVED BY: sensaRAneb Burrell

SECONDED BY: Elizabeth Daniels

CARRIED

7. **Staff Reports:**

SEAC: December 2021 Administration Report

Our Administration report begins tonight with appreciation for the valuable feedback that SEAC continues to provide into programs and services. Your insights, knowledge and generosity of time are all greatly appreciated.

As 2022 begins, we share two key leadership staffing updates also embedded in the Department update shared with SEAC. We welcome Conor Jinkinson to the role of System Lead Inclusive Student Services. Conor is currently transitioning to the role from his position as Principal at Bolton C Falby. The team also recognizes the tremendous career that Dr. Steve Graffi has had with the Durham District School Board as he transitions to adventures ahead in retirement. With over 34 years of service to Durham students, Steve has had impact for individual students as a clinical practitioner, in service model development and in setting the foundation for the critical work the team is currently engaged in to centre Indigenous Rights, Human Rights and equity in examining and shifting practices to better serve all students. Thank you Dr. Graffi.

Director's Annual Report 2021

A link to the Director's Annual Report 2021 was shared with SEAC members as an email separate from the agenda package with link to the DDSB website.

[Directors Annual Report](#)

PAaC on SEAC

PAaC on SEAC for December recommends discussion on 1) any considered changes for the next school year and 2) Special Education Plan consultation. Feedback on both of these items is invited and welcomed with invitation to provide input or for conversation. As we move into planning for the 2022-2023 school year, we will continue to be a district responsive to student needs through the provision of a range of programs which are outcome focused and foster independence and pathway options. At this time, teams are connecting with students enrolled in special education programs through IPRC and accessing in a fully virtual format to query return to in-person for either the change in term/semester, end of year or if seeking continuity as option into the 2022-2023 school year.

De-streamed Math Data

The Student Success and Inclusive Student Services teams are putting Grade Nine math course data together for SEAC. We have asked the Accountability and Assessment team to also include previous year academic & applied achievement data along with current year, Quad 1, achievement data. We will include this information for the January SEAC meeting.

Teams are immersed in planning for Inclusive Grade Nine courses as the move away from Applied/Academic is expanded to all Grade Nine courses for September.

Current Service Statistics

Currently in DDSB:

- 14 917 students are active to one or more services
- 12 620 students have IEPs/have individualized programming (per PowerTPM/non OnSIS verified)
- 2 435 students access learning through placement in a Special Education program/class

A snapshot of referral data (PowerTPM) shared with Family of Schools Operations on Thursday, December 2, 2021 includes:

Table 1 Referral Data

Type of Service	Number of Referrals
Psychological Services	2226
SE Instructional Facilitator	13643
Social Work	1458
Speech and Language	2465

With referrals and service from all teams, including Audiology, Hearing Resource and Vision Resource, the team is currently supporting 20 312 students.

Referral rates, particularly for mental health related supports, have increased.

As 2021 draws to a close, our Inclusive Student Service teams is appreciative of each member of SEAC. Thank you for another year of collaborative service to our community.

Board: Trustee Donna Edwards informed SEAC members that the Board of Trustees had had the annual Board elections and received information on the Directors report which is posted on the DDSB website.

8. Inclusive Student Services Report – December 2021

Updates this month include:

- Transition Information Nights
- Council for Exceptional Children Conference
- Mental Health and Well-Being
- Resource Highlight: Rick Hansen Foundation
- Creating Accessible Virtual Meetings

Transition Events for Families – Reminder

Annual Transition Night for Life Beyond High School

December 9th 6:30pm

Shared widely through, DDSB website, social media and schools.

Virtual event added this year; a number of community partners shared an overview of their services.

- Workshop series Jan through April also being added for further supports.

**Annual Grade 8 to Grade 9 Central Transition Night
January 13th 6:30pm**

Provided in advance of local HS events, support to families with information regarding board-wide supports, give guidance about questions to ask at local events, as well as explain changes in structure from elementary to secondary panel.

**DDSB Presents at Council for Exceptional Children Conference
Pilot to Support Transitions to Post Secondary Pathways for Students with
Developmental Disabilities**

Participation in this project, as a lead district, provided intensified support to schools to support Integrated Transition Planning supports for students which improved transition planning, access to resources for families and supported pathway options for students.

Council for Exceptional Children Conference: Kyla McKee, System Lead and Sade Gbalajobi, Transition Coordinator partnered with the Ministry of Education to present at the Council for Exceptional Children conference (December 3) on the overview of the pilot program, supports mobilized with community and families, student readiness for work training and lessons learned.

Mental Health and Well Being

- Psychological Services and Social Work staff reporting increase in service demand for range of services, including mental health supports in schools
- Staff continue to work to address system priorities:
 - Mental Health and Well Being workers delivering Tier 1 SEL program across the system
 - MH staff supporting tier 2/3 interventions
 - ASIST (suicide intervention) training provided to newly onboarded Social Work and Psychological Services staff
- BeMe (Black Excellence Made Evident) group is approaching the end of its first series:
 - Affinity space for Black youth- groups ran concurrently for male and female secondary students.
 - Focus on identity, well-being, self-esteem, mental health.
- Trails to Wellness group is also wrapping up:
 - Evidenced based treatment group for anxiety.
 - Two groups running concurrently for grade 7/8 students.

Resource Highlight: Rick Hansen Foundation

In a Ministry memo on November 25th, resources Bullying Awareness and fostering inclusion were shared with districts. The memo included a highlight of the Rick Hansen Foundation website included embedded lesson plans and parent resources. All available in both French and English. Information has been shared in a recent SERT eBulletin:

The Rick Hansen Foundation:

Inclusion Matters! Excluding or ignoring others is a painful form of bullying. Understanding and kindness are the first steps to make sure those with disabilities are never left out. Help your students learn more with Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) lessons, activities, videos and a virtual Inclusion Matters! RHF Ambassador presentation. Visit the Inclusion Matters!

English: [Inclusion Matters!](#)

French:

Creating Accessible Virtual Meetings

DDSB Communications and Innovation teams recently supported information to further support "Creating Accessible Virtual Meetings" for MS Teams, Google Meet and Zoom formats.

Strategies include:

Closed Captioning reminders

Live Transcription

For all virtual meetings and public-facing events, all staff are asked to ensure that closed captioning is available for all attendees.

9. Presentation:

The following resources are being shared to provide SEAC with the same materials that all registrants of the Life Beyond HS event will receive. This includes the link to our updated website which is now AODA compliant, a copy of the recording of our virtual event and the Q and A that was asked both in advance and during the event. Please feel free to share this with your organizations and the families you support. Our Transition Coordinator team can be reached at braden.sherwood@ddsb.ca and folashade.gbalajobi@ddsb.ca. We encourage you to email both as they support different schools and they will determine who is best to respond to your query.

[New Life Beyond HS website](#)

[Recording of the event](#)

[Questions & Answers](#)

System Lead Kyla McKee thanked Superintendent Andrea McAuley for having the DDSB lead this pilot program and for supporting the program. Kyla also acknowledged Braden and Sade for the amazing work they have been doing, which has led to a new and much needed role of transition co-ordinator at the DDSB.

Options to ask questions were given to families upon registration, during the presentation as well as after the event.

10. Open Discussion:

Feedback on the DRAFT Human Rights Policy & Procedures

- Looking at options of whether we need to look at the funding model and equity of access and opportunity.
- Might need definition of "undo hardship" for roles and responsibilities.
 - The "undo hardship" has a high threshold, decisions regarding this are made in consultation.
- A public open house was held on Monday December 13, 2021.
- The Board provides accommodation without documentation in good faith and does not require diagnosis.
- Concerns regarding privacy and sharing of information about diagnosis, perhaps biases could be assumed and cause barriers.
- Might be worth a letter to the Ministry to make suggestions to the update the content of an IEP, last revised 2004.

MOTION TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE MINISTRY REQUESTING A REVIEW OF RELEVANT INFORMATION ON THE IEP

MOVE: sensaRAneb Burrell

SECONDED: Donna Edwards

CARRIED

11. Business Arising from the Minutes:

- SIP funding letter will be sent before the election.

12. Association Reports & Committee Reports:

- Ontario Autism Program-update
- MCCSS-Ontario Autism Program
- PIC Agenda
- PIC Meeting Minutes November 17, 2021

13. Correspondence:

- Halton District School Board – Designated Disease Letter
- Halton District School Board – FASD

MOTION TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
REQUESTING CONSIDERATION TO CHANGE THE DEFINITION AROUND
DISABILITY TO REFLECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS CODE.

MOTION: Carolyn McLennon

SECONDED: Tara Culley

CARRIED

14. Community Concerns:

- Concerns about students and interventions for de-streamed math when they are struggling.
- There has been a lot of success with the de-streamed math.
- There are a few gaps and there is planning in place for more support.
- MTH1W1 is the new curriculum document for grade 9 de-streamed math.

15. Celebrations and Success:

- Celebration and Congratulations to Dr. Steve Graffi and his pending retirement.
- Eva is celebrating her daughter's success in self advocating at the university level.

16. Adjournment:

That the meeting does now adjourn at 8:37 p.m.

Next S.E.A.C. meeting – Thursday, January 20, 2022.

MOVED BY: Donna Edwards

SECONDED BY: Tara Culley

CARRIED

Report respectfully submitted by:

Eva Kyriakides, SEAC Chair

Table 2- Action Plan

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION
Write a letter to the ministry regarding IEP information	Trustee Donna Edwards to draft Chair Eva Kyriakides to finalize	ASAP
SIP letter	Eva Kyriakides	Before January 20, 2022 meeting
Breakdown of referrals by exceptionality	Superintendent Andrea McAuley	January 20, 2022
Letter to both the Federal and Provincial governments-definition of disability	Chair Eva Kyriakides	ASAP