



DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

STANDING COMMITTEE PUBLIC SESSION

Monday, January 3, 2022

Chairperson: Christine Thatcher

Vice-Chairperson: Patrice Barnes

Director of Education: Director Norah Marsh

Recording Secretary: Kathy Fitzpatrick

DATE: Monday, January 3, 2022

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Virtual

ATTACHMENTS: Agenda

Copies to:

All Trustees

Director of Education

All Superintendents

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Monday, January 3, 2022
7:00 p.m.

	PAGE
1. <u>Call to Order</u>	
2. <u>Land Acknowledgement</u>	Verbal
<p>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.</p>	
3. <u>Declarations of Interest</u>	Verbal
4. <u>Motion to Approve Agenda</u>	Verbal
5. <u>Community Presentations</u>	
6. <u>DDSB Presentations</u>	
7. <u>Director's Update</u> (Director Norah Marsh)	Verbal
8. <u>Recommended Actions</u>	
9. <u>Information Items</u>	
(a) Student Trustee Report (Student Trustees James Kay, De-Mario Knowles, Kayla Malcolm)	Verbal
(b) AODA Compliance Update and LEAD Canada Process (Superintendent Heather Mundy)	1-15

- | | |
|---|--------|
| (c) Trustee Attendance Records
(Chair Carolyn Morton) | 16-17 |
| (d) Free Menstrual Products Update
(Associate Director David Wright) | Verbal |
| (e) OPSBA Report
(Trustee Patrice Barnes) | Verbal |

10. Committee Reports

- | | |
|--|-------|
| (a) Equity and Diversity Ad Hoc Steering Committee, October 27, 2021
(Trustee Patrice Barnes) | 18-19 |
|--|-------|

11. Correspondence

- | | |
|---|-------|
| (a) <u>Other:</u> | |
| i. Halton District School Board (2 Letters) | 20-22 |
| ii. Thames Valley District School Board | 23-26 |

12. Other Business

13. Adjournment

DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

REPORT TO: Durham District School Board

DATE: January 3, 2022

SUBJECT: AODA Compliance Update and LEAD Canada Process

PAGE: 1 of 3

ORIGIN: Norah Marsh, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board
Heather Mundy, Superintendent of People and Culture (HRS)

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Trustees with an update on the recent Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Compliance Audit and the LEAD Canada Process.

2.0 Ignite Learning Strategic Priority/Operational Goals

Success – *Set high expectations and provide support to ensure all staff and students reach their potential every year.*

- Ensure compliance with AODA requirements to provide appropriate accommodations and support to students, staff and community.

Leadership – *Identify future leaders, actively develop new leaders and responsively support current leaders.*

- Work collaboratively with departments to revise processes for inclusion and accessibility.

3.0 Background

The Durham District School Board (DDSB) submitted its annual AODA Compliance Report in June 2021. In August 2021, the DDSB was selected by the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility for an AODA Desk Audit. Working with the Senior Compliance Analyst from the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, DDSB staff reviewed the AODA compliance and updated the DDSB Employee Emergency Response Plan. The AODA Desk Audit was completed in November 2021.

4.0 Analysis

4.1 AODA Compliance Audit

The AODA Audit has provided an opportunity to receive feedback on policies, processes and resources to support AODA compliance requirements. Staff identified key areas which required further review, revisions and implementation including:

4.1.1 Employee Emergency Response Plan Process

Staff collaborated with Health and Safety, Facilities Services and Ability Management to update the DDSB process for developing and implementing individualized Employee Emergency Response Plans, including:

- a. A document outlining the process/approach to individualized Emergency Response Plans at the DDSB.

- b. Share with staff the annual employee memo regarding individualized Emergency Response Plans.
- c. Share a memo with management staff about the responsibilities related to individualized Emergency Response Plans and the Employee Worksheet with regards to the development of individualized Emergency Response Plans.
- d. Create a template for an Employee Emergency Response Plan.

4.1.2 Accessibility Documentation

The Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility requires that staff have all information on accessibility located in one document and that it must be a separate document from the Accessibility Plan and Human Rights Policy. The document/policy will include information on all standards in one document. As we create our new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, a review of the Customer Service Policy will be communicated, and staff will be working on developing a new Accessibility Document that is in line with the recommendations as provided by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

4.2 LEAD Canada Process (Appendix A)

Our current Accessibility Working Group has representation from the Abilities Centre and they have identified an opportunity for the DDSB to participate in the LEAD Canada Process which focuses on advancing inclusion and accessibility and will support DDSB in assessing and analyzing our internal practices, processes and strategies. The process, supported by the Abilities Centre facilitators, consists of two half day workshops with key stakeholders in order to complete self-assessments in the areas of:

- a. Organizational Management
- b. Organizational Resources
- c. Organizational Delivery

The goal will be to identify areas of improvement with a focus on further development of accessibility and inclusive initiatives and this will help form the new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

This is an exciting opportunity to partner with a local organization which will build confidence in key areas of focus, while we work towards a best practice standard in the areas of inclusion and accessibility. The DDSB will be the first public school board to participate in the process.

5.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications related to the AODA Compliance Audit. The LEAD Canada Process is provided at no cost as grant funding was provided to the Abilities Centre to work with public organizations.

There are potential costs to meet the recommendations that may come from the LEAD Canada Process, however this will be brought forward for consideration and approval in advance.

6.0 Evidence of impact

1. Implementation of the updated Employee Emergency Response Plan Process.
2. The December 2021 LEAD Canada process will provide recommendations to support development of our Multi Year Accessibility Plan.
3. A new Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be created as well as the development of a new Accessibility Policy

7.0 Communication Plan

1. Employee Emergency Response Plan memos will be communicated to employees and leadership in the Fall of 2021.
2. LEAD Canada process report will be shared with Administrative Council and the Board of Trustees.
3. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – Spring 2022.

8.0 Conclusion and/or Recommendations

This report is provided to Board of Trustees for information.

9.0 Appendices

Appendix A – LEAD Canada Process

Report reviewed and submitted by:



Norah Marsh, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board



Heather Mundy, Superintendent of People and Culture (HRS)



LEAD Canada™

Advancing
Inclusion and
Accessibility


What is **LEAD**Canada™ ?

IMPROVING ACCESS AND DRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

LEAD Canada™ (Leading Equitable and Assessible Delivery) is a methodology to help corporations, governments, municipalities, non-profit organizations of all sizes to define and harness the values of inclusion and accessibility objectives into strategic plans, operating plans, business environment, performance metrics and organizational culture. An approach designed to generate economic and social return on investment.



Why it's **IMPORTANT**



LEAD will help you develop the know-how, confidence, and capability to serve the needs of all, regardless of age, ability or background, and lay the foundation for your organization to embrace accessibility and inclusion as important strategies for success.



**THE FIRST STEP OF
YOUR INCLUSION
JOURNEY**

An aerial photograph of a large, dense crowd of people, seen from above. The people are wearing various colored clothing, creating a mosaic of colors. The crowd is spread out on a light-colored surface, possibly a beach or a large open area. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue curved shape on the right side of the page.

BY THE NUMBERS:

Since 2012, the population age 15+ with disabilities has grown from **3.8 million** to **6.2 million**. The disability ratio also climbed, from **14% in 2012** to **22.3% in 2017**.

The economic impact is substantial with **22.3%** of Canada's **15.2 million** households contain at least one member living with a disability, the consumer spending of those households equals **\$215.7 BILLION¹**.

¹ Statistics Canada's Survey of Household Spending estimates average household spending was \$63,723 in 2017. Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017 and 2012; Survey of Household Spending, 2017; Labour Force Participation of Adults with Disabilities, 2012 13-1003-48.

How does it **WORK?**

The LEAD process will guide your organization through a **facilitated self-assessment** of your current inclusion practices and help you create an action plan to increase involvement and participation by persons of **all abilities, ages and backgrounds** in your business or community.

KEY STEPS

01



Establishing a vision team to guide the LEAD process

02



Completing pre-assessment activities to support session facilitation

03



In-person facilitated workshop

04



Developing the action plan

05

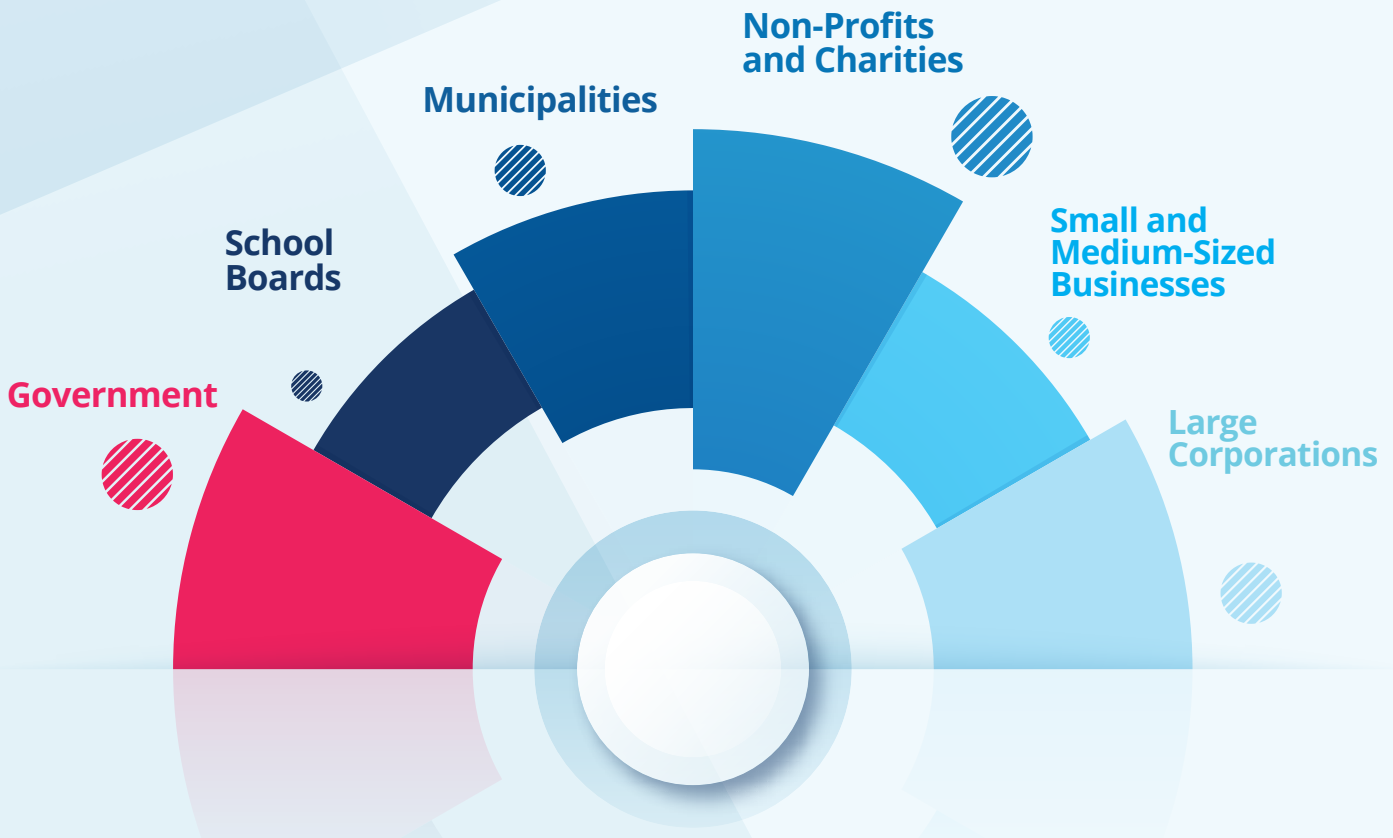


Implementation and communication

Every organization is unique, and the LEAD process is designed to be flexible and adaptable to support your organization's needs.

Is **LEAD**Canada™ the right fit for **YOU?**

The LEAD methodology can help any organization, regardless of sector or size, embrace accessibility and inclusion. The flexibility of the LEAD process, along with the self-assessment component of the process, means that the process is tailored to each participating organization, and the environment in which they operate.







LEAD Canada Approach to Inclusion and Accessibility

The LEAD process helps organizations evaluate their current competencies and gaps against key themes to identify opportunities to improve and enhance accessibility and inclusion at all **organizational levels**:



Who WE ARE



Abilities Centre is a non-profit organization and social enterprise committed **to helping everyone**, no matter their **ability, age or background**, to pursue their goals and participate fully in social and economic life.

From our community hub, research lab and inclusion incubator in the Durham Region, we deliver programs, lead research and advocacy, and create innovative solutions to help communities engage people of all abilities in the spirit of access and inclusion for all.

LEAD Canada is a registered trademark of Abilities Centre, delivered in partnership with Activity Alliance.

What is next? **CONTACT US**

Every organization's journey to accessibility and inclusion is unique; so too is each organization's **LEAD** process.

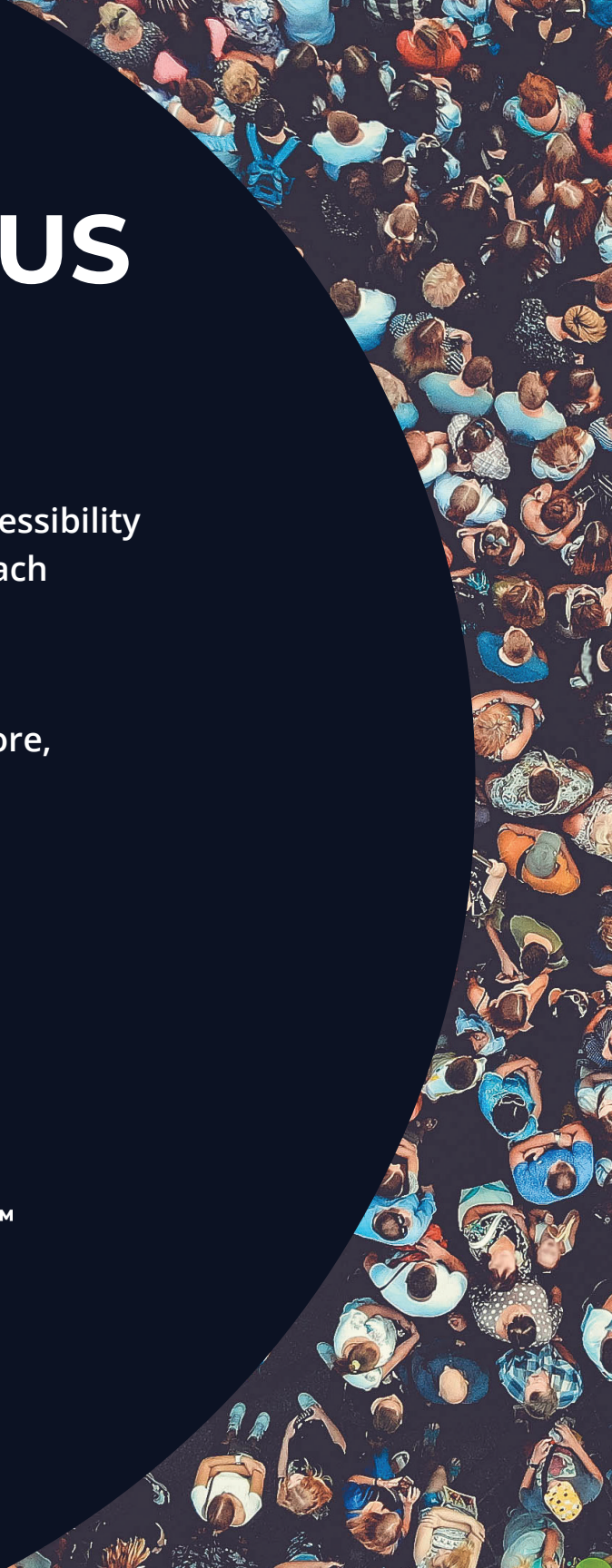
If you are interested in learning more, please contact us.

Phone: 1 866 639 1858

Website: leadcanada.org

Email: lead@abilitiescentre.org

LEADCanada™



LEAD Canada is a registered trademark of Abilities Centre, delivered in partnership with Activity Alliance.

Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport.

LEADCanada™
leadcanada.org



**activity
alliance**
disability
inclusion
sport

TRUSTEE ATTENDANCE AT BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS DECEMBER 2020-JUNE 2021



STUDENT TRUSTEES

Meetings: • Board • Standing Committee • Committee of the Whole (CW)	Date	Patrice Barnes	Michael Barrett	Chris Braney	Paul Crawford	Donna Edwards	Darlene Forbes	Niki Lundquist	Carolyn Morton	Linda Stone	Scott Templeton	Christine Thatcher	Arpita Savaliya	Logan Keeler	Aaliyah Jaleel
CW	07-Dec-20	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	07-Dec-20	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	04-Jan-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	04-Jan-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	18-Jan-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	18-Jan-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	01-Feb-21	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	01-Feb-21	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	16-Feb-21	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	16-Feb-21	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√
CW	01-Mar-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	01-Mar-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	22-Mar-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	22-Mar-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	06-Apr-21	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	06-Apr-21	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Special Board: 6:40 pm	06-Apr-21	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Special Board: 10:15 pm	06-Apr-21	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	19-Apr-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	19-Apr-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	03-May-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	03-May-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Special Board	03-May-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	17-May-21	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	17-May-21	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	07-Jun-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	07-Jun-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√
CW	21-Jun-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	21-Jun-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Special Board	22-Jun-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	x	√



TRUSTEE ATTENDANCE AT BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS SEPTEMBER 2021-NOVEMBER 2021

STUDENT TRUSTEES

Meeting: • Board • Standing Committee • Committee of the Whole (CW)	Date	Patrice Barnes	Michael Barrett	Chris Braney	Paul Crawford	Donna Edwards	Darlene Forbes	Niki Lundquist	Carolyn Morton	Linda Stone	Scott Templeton	Christine Thatcher	James Kay	De-Mario Knowles	Kayla Malcolm
CW	07-Sep-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	07-Sep-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Special Board	07-Sep-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	21-Sep-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	21-Sep-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	04-Oct-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	04-Oct-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	18-Oct-21	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	18-Oct-21	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	01-Nov-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing Committee	01-Nov-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CW	15-Nov-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Board	15-Nov-21	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√



**Standing Committee
Public Session
January 3, 2022**

Advisory, Ad Hoc Committee Report

Name of Committee: Equity & Diversity Ad Hoc Steering Committee

Meeting Date & Time: Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Chairs: Donald McLeod (Co-Chair) Patrice Barnes (Co-Chair)

Meeting Attendees:

Camille Alli - Staff
 Patrice Barnes - Co-Chair
 Chrystal Bryan - Staff
 Oliver Forbes - Community Member
 Mohamed Hamid - Staff
 Mary Hindle - Staff
 Margaret Lazarus - Staff
 Norah Marsh - Staff
 Merrill Mathews - Staff
 Devika Mathur - Staff
 Eleanor McIntosh - Staff
 Donald McLeod - Co-Chair
 Michael Menheere - Staff
 Carolyn Morton - Trustee
 Cheryl Rock - Staff
 Jacqueline Steer - Staff
 Symone Taylor – Student Representative
 Kenroy Wilson - Community Member

Agenda Highlights:

1. The Side by Side Family Advocate Program is up and running. The advocates meet with administrators to facilitate and to navigate situations that occur with Black students.
2. The advocate works with students up to Grade 6; information about the role of the advocate has been shared with all elementary administrators.
3. The Equity Team will be meeting with Dr. Nicole West-Burns, Director of School Services with the Centre for Urban Schooling at OISE to receive her input on the Compendium for Black Student Success.
4. Every administrator in the Durham District School Board has been provided the opportunity to participate in the equity learning sessions offered by Dr. Nicole West-Burns.
5. With the work being done on the Human Rights Policy which includes anti-discrimination and anti-racism it will potentially meet the requirements of Districts to have an Equity Policy despite the name equity not being in the title. Given its content, the DDSB may not need an Equity Policy in addition to the Human Rights Policy.
6. DBEN (Durham Black Educators Network) is continuing to expand and is partnering with Student Success for the second year.
7. An Africentric Heritage Program will launch on October 30, 2021 at Viola Desmond P.S. The program will run until June 11, 2022.
8. BeMe (Black Excellence Made Evident) is a virtual pilot program created earlier this year and is offered to Black youth to help build a community for high school students.
9. BeMe provides an opportunity for Black boys and girls to be visible and re-engaged in their schools and communities.
10. The BeMe Program utilizes framework such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Narrative Therapy.



December 13th, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Ministry of Education 5th Floor
438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

The Honourable Christine Elliot
Ministry of Health, 8th Floor
438 University Ave. Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce and Minister Elliot:

At its most recent committee meeting on December 7th, 2021, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) carried the following motion:

“That the HDSB SEAC write a letter asking the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health to consider amending the Immunization of School Pupils Act to include Covid-19 as a “designated disease”, due to the high impact of COVID on the disruption to learning for students with special education needs”

Students with special education needs have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, academically, emotionally, and through loss of support services typically provided in a school setting. To ensure equitable access to education for all, it is essential that schools remain open so that students with special needs can be accommodated appropriately. This will only be possible if we are able to ensure safety in our schools throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, there is no mandate for eligible students to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Eligible students now include all students from the age of 5 and over. The addition of COVID-19 as a “designated disease” within the Immunization of School Pupils Act is a crucial step in our fight against this disease. It will hopefully inspire an increased uptake of the vaccine amongst our children and youth, which will provide increased protection for those who are too young or medically unable to be vaccinated in school communities. This will result in a safer environment for all students, staff, and their families. It will also help ensure consistent and equitable access to appropriate learning environments for students with special education needs.

In approving this motion, the HDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is adding its voice to the many boards and SEACs who have made the same request. I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of this request to further improve the safety of the learning environments in Halton and across Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alison Brindle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alison Brindle, Chair of the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Margo Shuttleworth, Chair of Halton District School Board



December 13, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
 Ministry of Education 5th Floor
 438 University Ave.
 Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce:

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the Halton District School Board recently received letters from the Avon Maitland District School board, the Rainy River District School Board, and the Rainbow District School Board SEAC, regarding their support of Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). This proposed legislation will require all Boards of Education throughout Ontario to develop policies and guidelines with respect to FASD and require the Ontario College of Teachers ECE programs to provide training with respect to FASD.

A FASD diagnosis impacts children's ability to thrive in school due to the combination of deficits associated with the diagnosis and their limited capacity to understand expectations and demands. For this reason, staff need to be taught about the early signs and symptoms of FASD and how to provide appropriate accommodation in the classroom and school boards need to develop policies and guidelines with respect to FASD for the academic environment.

At our committee meeting on December 7th, 2021, the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee approved the following motion:

That the Special Education Advisory Committee recommends sending a letter to the Minister of Education endorsing Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder).

Carried unanimously.

In approving this motion, the members of the Halton District School Board's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) ask that you acknowledge our support for Bill 172 as it will help our students and educators experience success in their classrooms and improve their overall wellbeing.

We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alison Brindle'.

Alison Brindle, Chair of the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Margo Shuttleworth, Chair of Halton District School Board



Mark Fisher, Director of Education and Secretary

November 30, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce,
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22 Floor,
900 Bay St.,
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce,

The SEAC of the Thames Valley District School Board is again writing to highlight the urgent need for education and action in preventing, identifying, and serving individuals impacted by Prenatal Alcohol Exposure (PAE), especially in our schools.

Research shows that identification and support by age six is an important protective factor in improving outcomes for individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html>). Throughout the pandemic, rates of drinking have increased – population studies from 2014 show a prevalence of over four per cent of the population (May et. al., 2014) – and it has been linked with over 400 comorbid conditions (Popova et. al., 2016), including learning challenges, mental health conditions and many physical ailments.

Primary characteristics may include:

- challenges with impulsivity,
- attention,
- abstract concepts,
- memory,
- processing speed,
- sequencing,
- reactivity,
- receptive language,
- generalizing information,
- sensory input,
- linking actions to outcomes which impact their ability to participate in and benefit from educational programs.

Physical defects may include:

- distinctive facial features,
- deformities of joints,
- limbs and fingers,

- slow physical growth before and after birth,
- vision or hearing problems,
- heart defects and problems with kidneys and bones,
- brain and central nervous system problems. (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fetal-alcohol-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20352901>)

Since 2017, attempts to recognize and serve those people through the following Bills on FASD have died on the table:

Bill 191 – The Bill would have amended the Education Act to provide for board activities to promote awareness and understanding of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including best practices to support pupils who may have FASD. Introduced by S. Kiwala on December 13, 2017.

Bill 44 – The Bill would have amended the Education Act to provide for board activities to promote awareness and understanding of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including best practices to support pupils who may have FASD. Introduced by S. Kiwala on April 11, 2018.

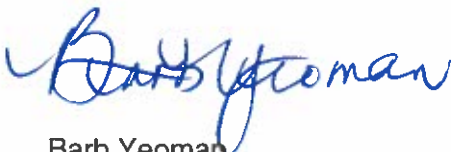
Bill 172 – The Bill would have required boards of education to develop policies and guidelines with respect to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Teachers' colleges and early childhood education programs shall be required to provide training with respect to FASD. Introduced by K. Wynne on February 18, 2020.

Attached is our letter from June of this year outlining the urgent need and huge benefits that would occur from prevention, recognition, diagnosis, service and supports. We ask for your commitment to act now for the thousands who struggle with FASD in all aspects of their lives.

This is an inter-ministry concern and strategic action by the government is needed to ensure meaningful change. Together we can improve experiences and outcomes through recognition, professional development and appropriate programs and services.

We greatly appreciate the anticipated attention to this matter, from you and your colleagues.

With Kindest Regards,



Barb Yeoman,
Chair, TVDSB SEAC 2021-2022,
Trustee, County of Oxford

Cc: Honourable Christine Elliott, Ministry of Health
Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Honourable Rod Phillips, Ministry of Long-Term Care
Chair Lori-Ann Pizzolato, Thames Valley District School Board
Mark Fisher, Director of Education, Thames Valley District School Board
Chairs, Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees



Mark Fisher, Director of Education and Secretary

June 17, 2021

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

The Honorable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce,

In 2019, the Chair of SEAC of TVDSB wrote a letter in support of then Bill 44: An Act to Amend the Education Act In Relation to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Unfortunately, the Bill did not achieve passage at that time. We are very encouraged that Bill 172, Education Statute Law Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder), 2020 has passed second reading and has been referred to the Standing Committee on Social Justice. The intent of this letter is to express the support of the Special Education Advisory Committee of the Thames Valley District School Board for Bill 172, which we believe is very important for our students and communities.

Since prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) impacts all aspects of life, health, education and relationships, increased awareness, understanding, training and improved programs and supports are urgently needed to support individuals and families affected by this neurodevelopmental condition. Recent research shows a prevalence of over 4% of the population (May et al., 2014) and it has been linked with over 400 comorbid conditions (Popova et al., 2016) including learning challenges, mental health conditions, and many physical ailments. The manifestation of these challenges place students at a significant disadvantage in education as they are unable to meet social and academic expectations. The result is often use of discipline and exclusion which lead to greater difficulties. Lack of early identification and accommodation is known to increase these challenges.

In the TVDSB catchment area, we have had some staff trained to support a now defunct (formerly Trillium funded) virtual clinic and have partnered with Community Services Coordination Network (CSCN) and the FASD E.L.M.O. Network to raise awareness and offer additional professional development. Grassroots initiatives unfortunately, are not sustainable without provincial policy, training, and investment. Education is the key to prevention, early identification, services, and successful outcomes for FASD. Adopting a FASD-informed educational approach would meet a key goal of reducing exclusionary practices as the underlying challenges are understood and supported. Prevention messaging could also drastically reduce the numbers of infants born with FASD.

Thames Valley District School Board - Learning Support Services

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We build each student's tomorrow, every day.

We urge the Minister to take the lead to improve programs, services, and outcomes for all students by ensuring that educators have the knowledge and tools to meet the needs of FASD students. On behalf of the SEAC of TVDSB, we are asking for and appreciate your support of Bill 172.

Respectfully,



Barbara Yeoman
Chair, TVDSB SEAC 2021-2022
Trustee, County of Oxford

Cc: Chair Lori-Ann Pizzolato, Thames Valley District School Board
Mark Fisher, Director of Education, Thames Valley District School Board
Chairs, Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees